

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

VUEWEEKLY

642 / FEB 7 - FEB 13, 2008 | FREE
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HAY

CANADIAN SONGWRITER EMERGES AFTER FOUR YEARS
IN FIELD & TOWN (MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / 53)

DEN

FRONT: ELECTION PREVIEW / 7 ARTS: MUMP & SMOOT / 41 FILM: I'M NOT THERE / 48

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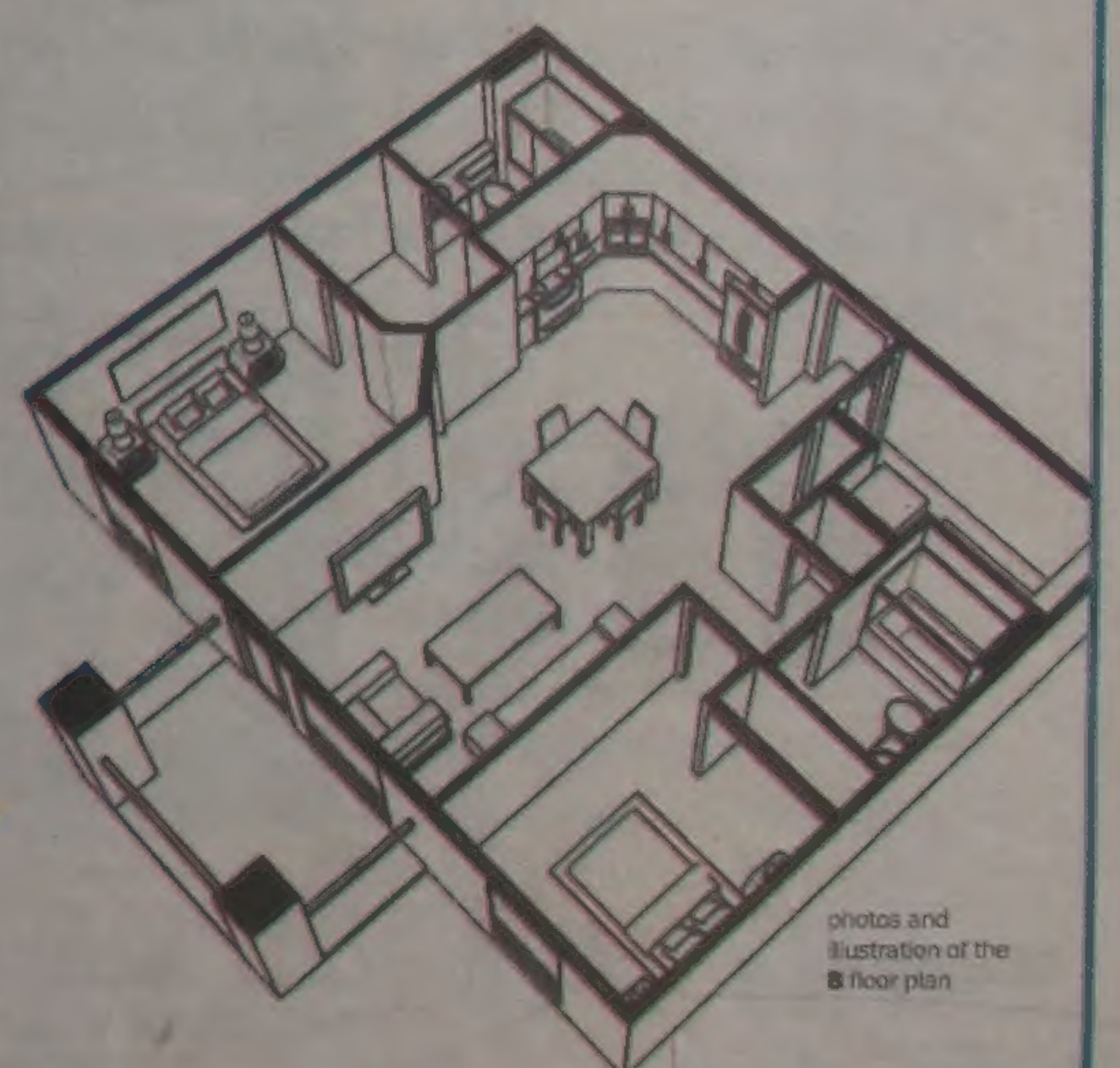
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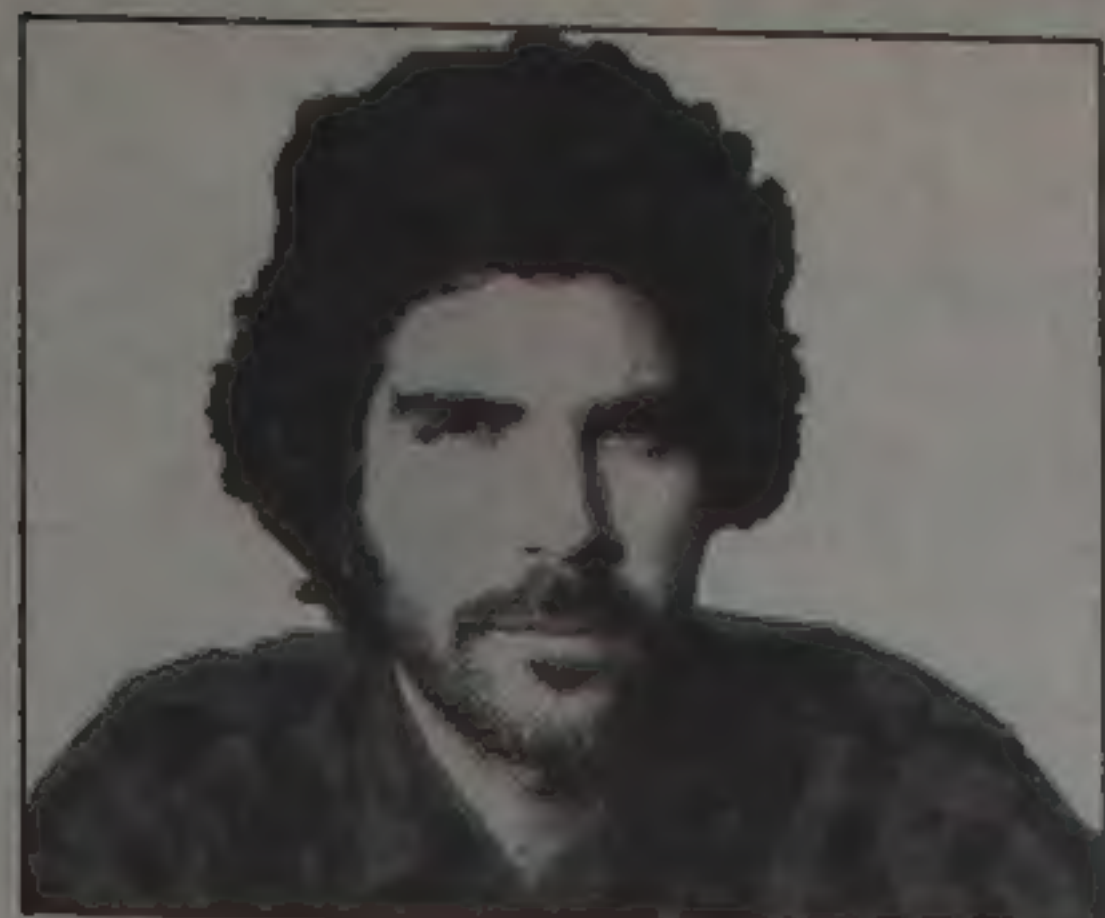
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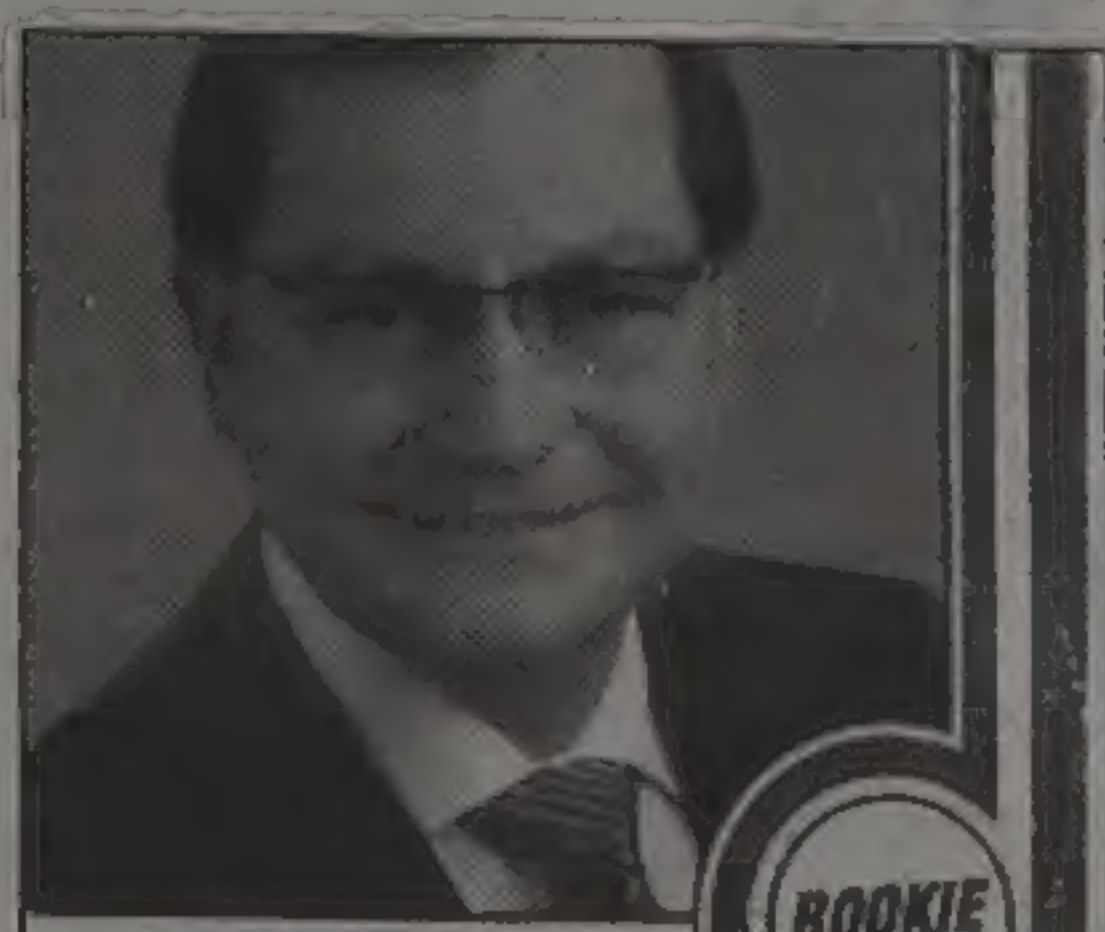
ON THE COVER



HAYDEN / 53

"Coming up with ideas is a blast—singing a melody for the first time with the realization the Beatles and the Beach Boys haven't taken it yet, or that I've rewritten something I already wrote. I did that on this album, once, I think." —Hayden, musician, on his songwriting process.

NEWS

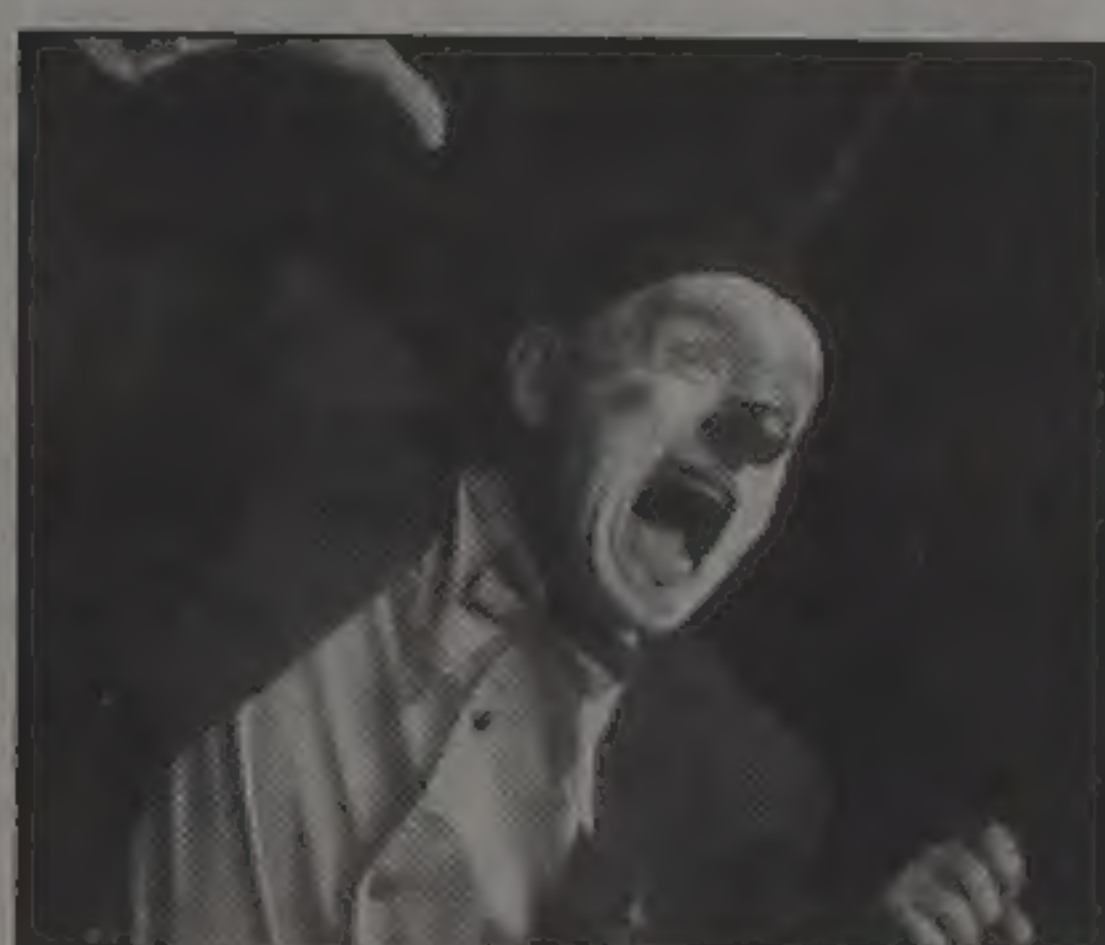


ROOKIE

ELECTION PREVIEW / 7

"The puck has been dropped on the 2008 provincial election, and Albertans will head to the polls on Mar 3 to elect a new government. *Vue* takes a look at some of the stats for the teams that have a shot at capturing a piece of the prize." —Scott Harris, colour commentator, on the election call.

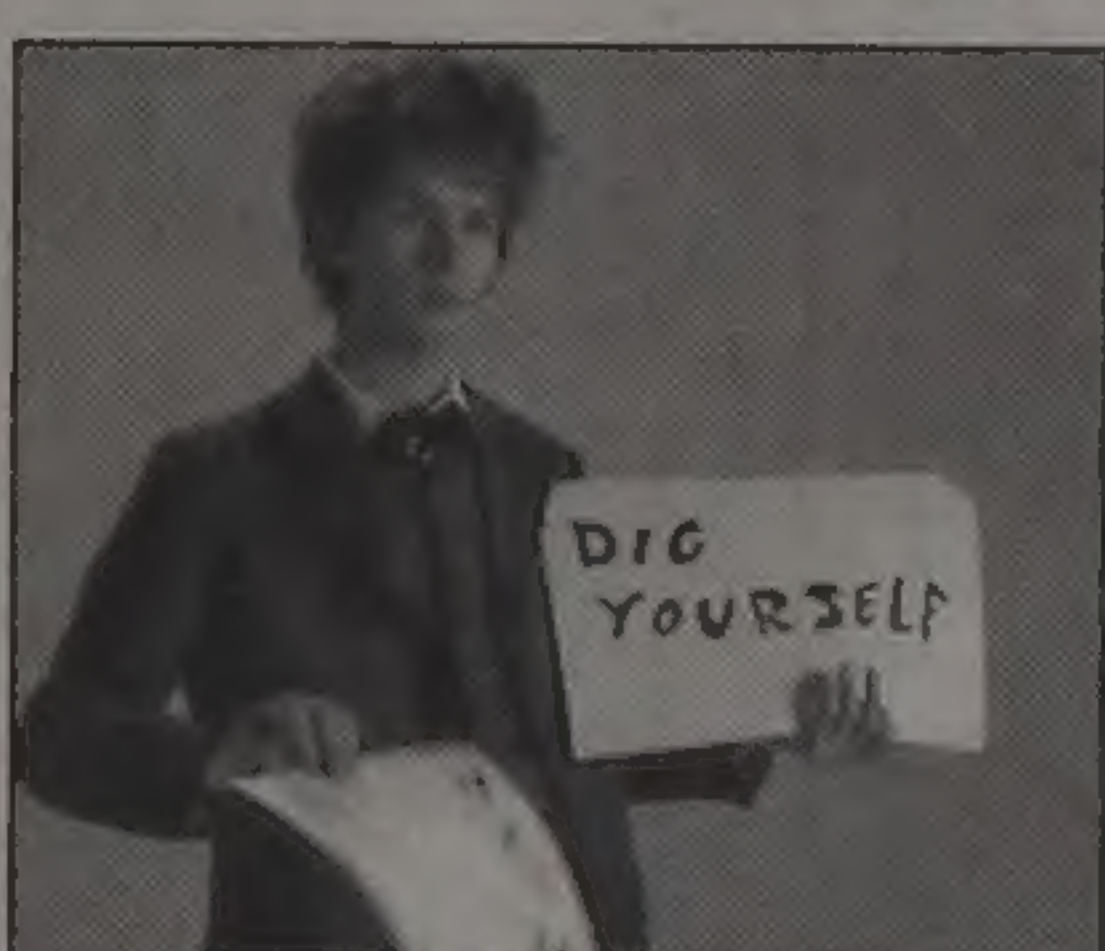
ARTS



MUMP AND SMOOT IN SOMETHING / 41

"Like the way I eat my yogurt?" —Michael Kennard, aka prince of clowns Mump, on eating dairy.

FILM



I'M NOT THERE / 48

"It sounds like a radical exercise in semi-otics. It is. ... But it's about the paradox of a popular artist's obligation to speak only for himself while also speaking for all of us, and the accompanying schisms this incites between his private and public life." —Josef Braun, critic, on the Bob Dylan anti-biopic.

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SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

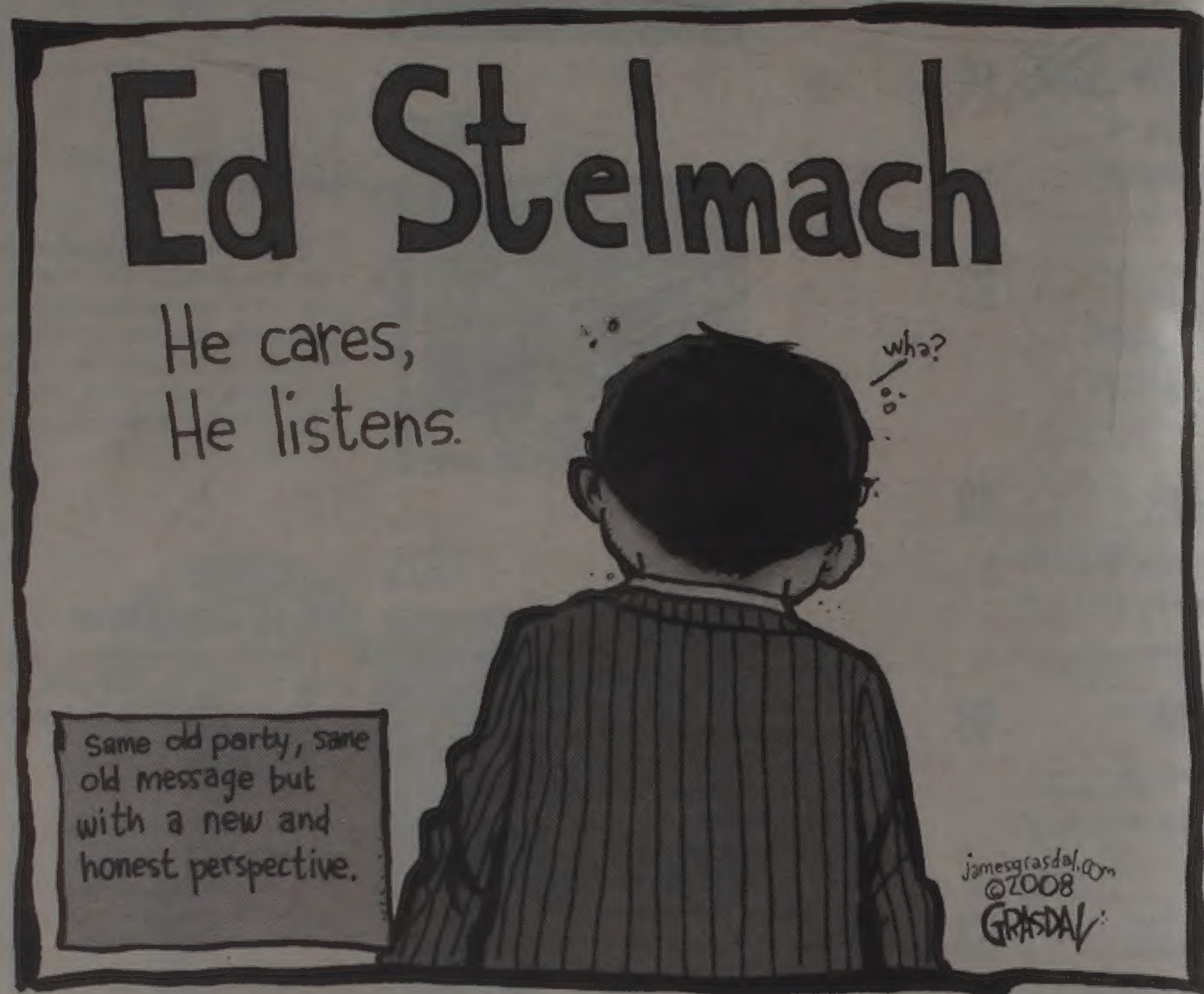
Here we go. To the surprise of absolutely no one (except perhaps Albertans for Change, who somewhat curiously ran full-page ads in both major dailies challenging "Ed" to call an election the very day everyone knew he was going to do just that), Premier Ed Stelmach dropped the writ immediately after the Feb 4 throne speech, sending Albertans to the polls on March 3.

Much like the race for president south of the border, the theme of election 2008 in Alberta can be summed up in one word: change. Opposition parties from left, right and centre are hammering home the message that after more than 36 years at the helm the Tories are out of ideas, out of touch and overly complacent as they saunter towards four decades in power. It's especially hard to argue with the latter point given that the first two days of the campaign saw Stelmach using public facilities—first the supposedly non-partisan media room at the legislature to launch his campaign and then a public hospital to announce an already dead-in-the-water initiative to get more health professionals into the system—as his party's personal playthings.

Hard as it is to fathom, even the party in power is running on a platform of change. With the campaign slogan "Change that works for Albertans," Ed Stelmach is continuing the long Conservative election tradition of distancing himself as much as possible from the previous government while still flying the Tory blue.

While the sentiment of change is undeniably in the air this election, it's hard to see just how much is likely to change come the morning of March 4. While campaign implosions are certainly possible (some would say even inevitable with Stelmach in the driver's seat), between the bulging Tory war chest, the rural-urban voting divide, the NDP attacking the Liberals with as much vigour as they do the Conservatives, a fledgling far-right party that enters the election still scrambling to find half their candidates and a Tory vote that polls seem to indicate is more likely to stay home than to switch parties, the math would seem to point to yet another government in which all the power goes to the Tories.

While there is a sense of inevitability, due in large part to our flawed first-past-the-post electoral system and wild variations in the value of one's ballot depending on where they live, this election is the first in a long time where there are cracks in the armour. With the Ralph factor gone, disenchanted Tories staying home and pressing issues that may reverse the precipitous 15-year slide in voter turnout, this election may prove to be the beginning of the end of the dynasty. ▽



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MAIL LETTERS

FIBROMYALGIA AND CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME NEED MORE ATTENTION

I am not only a former born-and-raised Edmontonian, but also a 46-year-old woman who has been hit with Fibromyalgia & Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Thus I'm writing to comment on the article I read in your publication ("When the treatment is worse than the disease," Jan 24 - Jan 30, 2008). As a woman with this health malady and also a woman who started a non-profit organization for persons with this who live in the Okanagan Valley called SOFA—Sunny Okanagan FM-ME Association—I feel qualified to comment.

I absolutely agree with what the writer stated. Past that, I and all of us who suffer from this are absolutely stymied and sick of those in the medical community who try to pull their dark shades on every time the subject comes up, and try to act as if it doesn't exist. If one did their research they would find that the medical community knew of this ailment back in the 1800s and that is the main reason the medical communities actions towards those who have this is tragic.

This health malady hits people of both sexes and at all ages, however, it

most commonly strikes women in their working years of age 23 through to approximately 60, which is what's so sad about it. Those who suffer from Fibromyalgia & Chronic Fatigue Syndrome should be given a crown upon each one's head and treated like royalty. In many cases these maladies causes the sufferer to be completely or mostly bedridden.

The medical community needs to take an important step to come forward now and deal with this health malady, and at least treat those who have it with respect and dignity and assist them in any way that they can.

SHERYL ANN WILSON

THAT'S WHAT HE SAID

If abortion ("No access, no choice," Jan 24 - Jan 30, 2008) is a woman's right, there is no such thing as a father. If the woman alone decides whether an embryo is to become a human being, how does the man incur parental responsibility?

The pro-choice female has it both ways. It's "my body" when she wants to abort against the man's will, but "our baby" when she wants the man to take responsibility.

ALVIN CARRIER

IMPACTS OF BOOZE WORSE THAN POT

I'd like to compliment Connie Howard on a good article ("The ironies of the things we know," Jan 31 - Feb 6, 2008)

While we are asking someone, anyone to explain about pot being illegal and all those other substances being legal, let's also ask them about alcohol. Seems that it's perfectly OK to sell a substance that can get you so blasted that take your two kids out and freeze them to death, and you have no idea of what you have done.

I'm 47 years old, own and manage a successful business and have smoked pot most of my adult life. It would be impossible to consume enough pot to get wasted enough to do something like that. I'll bet that father doesn't do one-tenth the time that Emery is going to do. This country needs to get a grip on reality.

S. BROOKS


Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by email (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.



Stelmach pulls the trigger on election '08

THE PUCK HAS BEEN DROPPED on the 2008 provincial election, and Albertans will head to the polls on Mar 3 to elect a new government. All the parties are talking about change—even, somehow, the Progressive Conservatives, who have been in power in the province for more than 36 years. At the start of the 28-day campaign season, *Vue* takes a look at the some of the stats for the teams that have a shot at capturing a piece of the prize. —SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

PC Alberta



ED STELMACH **ROOKIE**

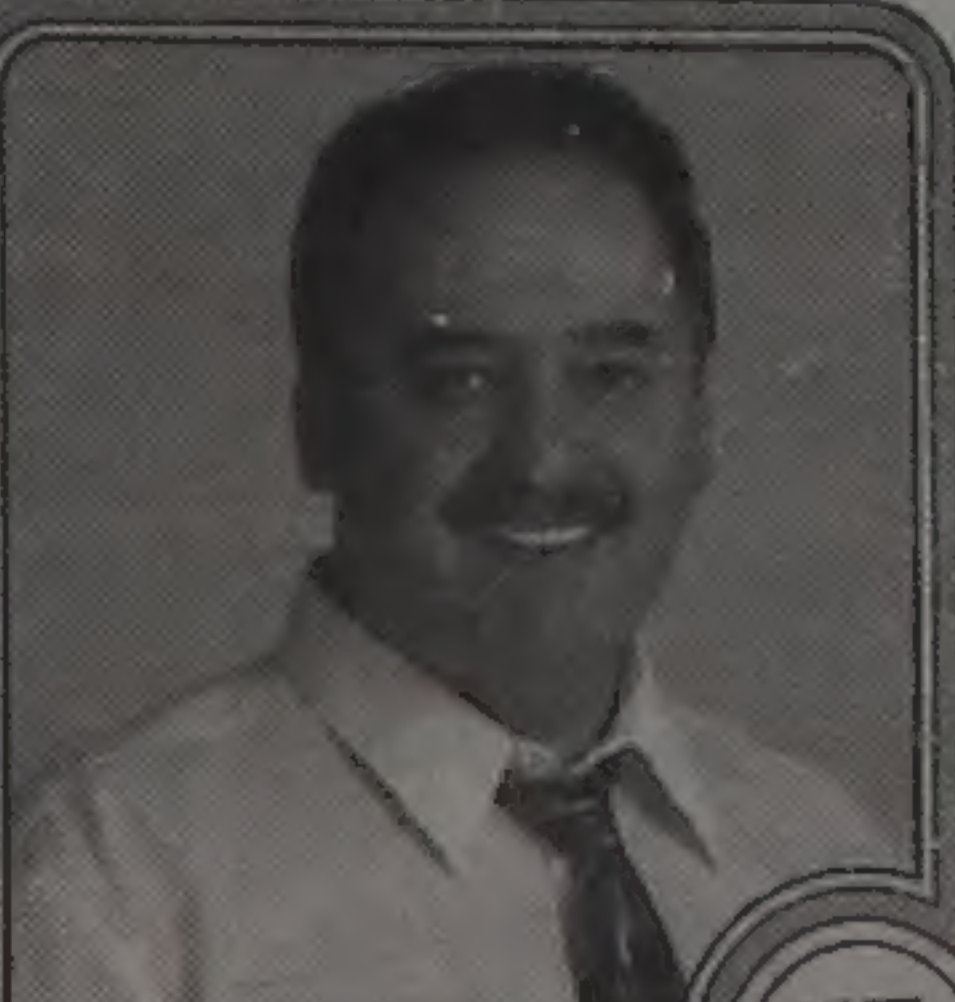
2004 PARTY RESULTS

Leader: Ralph Klein
Votes: 416 886 (46.8%)
62 elected

Rookie PC leader Ed Stelmach has had a rough season since being called up to the bigs and sworn in as premier on Dec 14, 2006 after winning the PC party leadership. His rookie year saw an affordable housing crisis, the EUB spying scandal, the Bill 46 controversy, a "compromise on a compromise" in announcing a new oil and gas royalty regime and a controversial climate change plan that puts off real emissions reductions until 2020.

Like Ralph Klein did with Don Getty, Stelmach is distancing himself from the record of the previous government, and running under the banner of "change that works for Albertans" despite sitting as a Conservative MLA since 1993 and as a cabinet minister in various portfolios under Klein since 1997.

Alberta's NDP



BRIAN MASON **LEFT WING**


2004 RESULTS

Leader: Brian Mason
Votes: 90 829 (10.2%)
4 elected

Former Edmonton city councillor Brian Mason has been an NDP MLA since winning the 2000 Edmonton-Highlands by-election after the resignation of Pam Barrett. Mason got to sew the "C" on his jersey as NDP leader on Sep 18, 2004 after Raj Pannu stepped down from the position.

Mason led the NDP into the 2004 election, doubling the number of NDP seats to four, all in Edmonton. In the lead-up to the election Mason has criticized the Taft Liberals almost as much as he has the Tories, charging that neither can be counted on for change due to the donations they accept from "big oil and other large corporations."

Alberta Liberal



KEVIN TAFT **CENTRE**

2004 RESULTS

Leader: Kevin Taft
Votes: 261 737 (29.4%)
16 elected

Alberta Liberal leader Kevin Taft rose to prominence in 1997 as the author of the best-selling book *Shredding the Public Interest*. He was first elected to the legislature in 2001, taking Conservative Wendy Kinsella into the boards to capture the Edmonton-Riverview seat.

He became Liberal leader in Mar 2004 following the resignation of Ken Nichol. In the 2004 election, the Liberals more than doubled their seat count and Taft earned more votes than any other candidate and the largest margin of victory in reclaiming his seat.

While Taft has largely kept his sights on the governing Tories, he recently accused the rival NDP of being "politically irrelevant."

ALBERTA greens



GEORGE READ **FORWARD**

2004 RESULTS

Leader: George Read
Votes: 24 451 (2.75%)
0 elected

The Alberta Greens selected George Read to head the party of recycled sticks in Nov 2003, and he led the party to its most successful result in the 2004 election, running a party-record 49 candidates across the province and increasing their vote 10-fold, to 2.75%, but won no seats.

While the party draws support from across the political spectrum, the NDP have the most to lose from rising support for the Greens in the province. Vote counts for the Greens topped the NDP in more than half the ridings in Calgary in 2004 and in many rural ridings, including Banff-Cochrane, where the Greens had their best showing, capturing 15 per cent of the vote.

WILDROSE ALLIANCE



PAUL HINMAN **RIGHT WING**

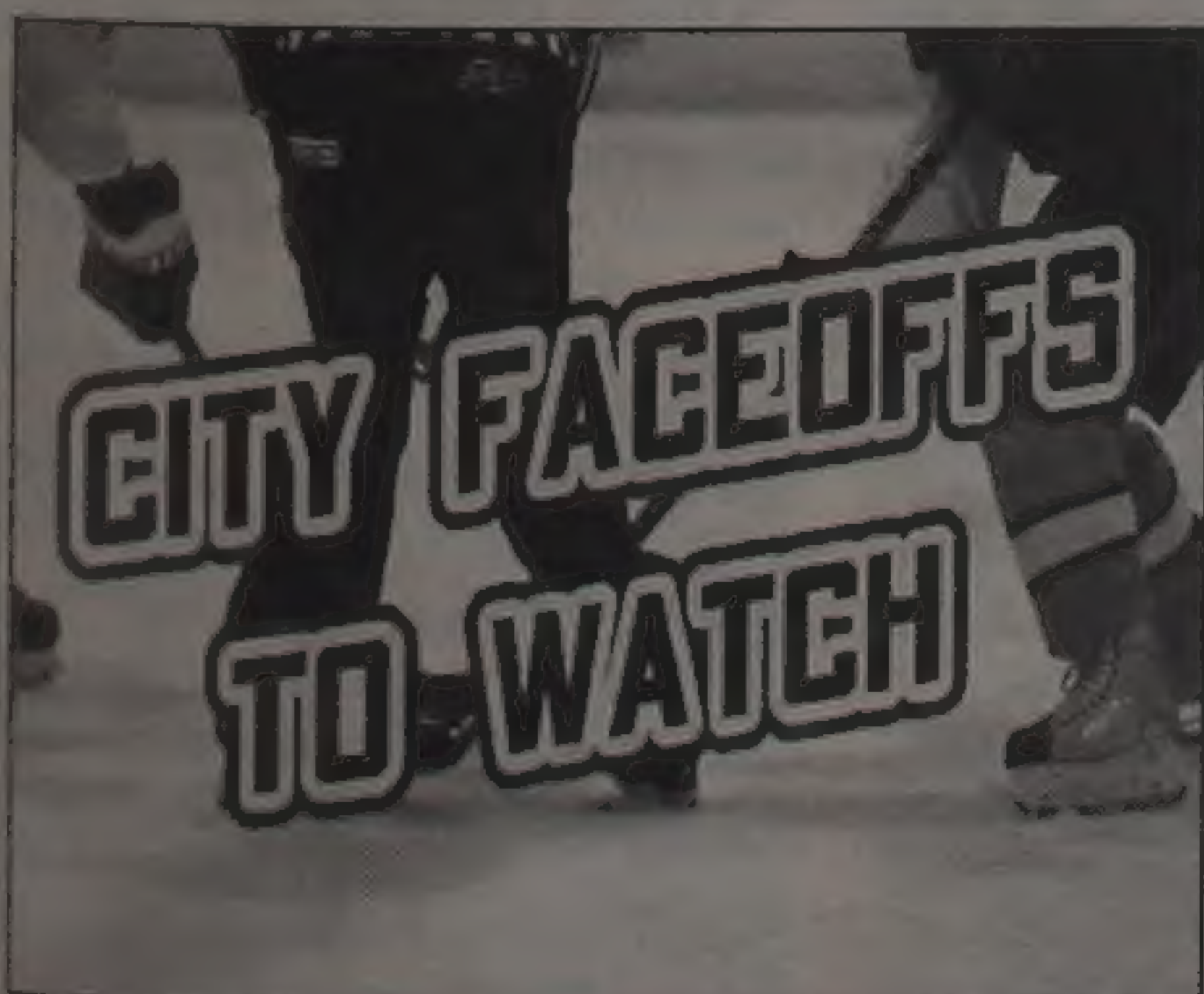
2004 RESULTS

Leader: Randy Thorsteinson
Votes: 77 466 (8.7%)
1 elected

The newest franchise in the league, the Wildrose Alliance formed on Jan 29, 2008 through a merger of two provincial far-right-wing parties, the Alberta Alliance and the six-month-old Wildrose Party. Getting to the game so late means the party is scrambling for candidates and will likely focus entirely on rural ridings.

Hinman was elected under the Alberta Alliance banner in the 2004 election, beating Conservative Brody Jacobs by just 129 votes, and was asked to lead the newly merged party into the election.

Somehow coming from the right of the Tories, the party advocates ignoring all the recommendations of the Hunter Report on royalties, smaller government and the replacement of programs such as Employment Insurance and the Canadian Pension Plan with provincial equivalents.



EDMONTON-CALDER The NDP's David Eggen squeaked by in 2004 with a margin of victory of just 337 votes over the PC's Brent Rathgeber in a three-way race. The hard-working Eggen has been one of the most effective and visible MLAs in his rookie outing under the dome, and he hasn't stopped the frenetic door knocking that won it for him last time around. Eggen definitely deserves to repeat in this fickle riding that has switched parties each of the last three elections.

EDMONTON-CASTLE DOWNS Tory Thomas Lukaszuk won by a landslide three votes over Liberal Chris Kibermanis, who has spent the interim period knocking on doors in the riding and is back for a rematch he could win in an election focused on change.

EDMONTON-GLENORA One of the closest three-way races in 2004, Liberal Bruce Miller should have it wrapped up this time around, especially with NDP candidate Brian Fleck leaving the race at the 11th hour.

EDMONTON-MANNING Former Liberal Dan Backs is running as an independent in the riding after being turfed from caucus by leader Kevin Taft. The riding was a close one in 2004, with Backs winning by just 282, and the right-leaning Backs could split the Liberal vote or take votes from the Tories, so it's anyone's game.

EDMONTON-MEADOWLARK A margin of victory of only 193 votes delivered the riding to Liberal Maurice Tougas, who has stepped down in the riding. Conservative Raj Sherman is up against

Liberal Debbie Cavaliere, who had hoped for the Tory nomination in the riding before dropping out.

EDMONTON-STRATHCONA It's out with Raj Against the Machine and in with Notley Cruë, as labour lawyer Rachel Notley steps into the NDP stronghold following the retirement of popular MLA Raj Pannu. Notley has been knocking on doors for months, and with chosen PC candidate Hughena Gagne dropping out at the last minute, Notley looks likely to make it four in a row for the Dippers. ▽

The faces are all different

MINISTER FAUST / ministerfaust@vuwweekly.com
African faces. Some people can't tell them apart. And others see only the face of African tragic victimhood. Each false vision denies a range of beauty, individuality and hope.

Humanity—and therefore the human face—began in Africa, somewhere around Kenya. The Leakey anthropology dynasty has been asserting this for half a century; it's commonly accepted wisdom in science. But during a recent CBC report by Wendy Mesley on a DNA "roots-tracing" agency, street interviews suggested that few people know that Africa is humanity's common home.

Fewer still seemed to know that modern humans (Cro-Magnons) originated in Africa and only later spread out to Eurasia, Oceania and the Americas. How long they looked "African" is unknown—moreover, contrary to Western stereotypes, Africans do not form a monolithic physical type. As physical anthropologists are fond of saying, because humanity has dwelt longer in Africa than anywhere else there is greater physical variation among African populations than among non-Africans. Nelson Mandela, like many South Africans, has features that, hair aside, wouldn't cause a second glance among many East Asian populations; there are the peoples of the so-called Pygmy nationalities of the central continental rain forest, mostly under 4'11"; there are tall and slender Masai and Ethiopians whose bodies seem designed either for ballet or marathons; and there are the frequently voluptuous peoples of Ghana. Skin tones vary from the brownish-yellow of non-Arab (ie African) Egyptians to the "blue" black of some Nubians. Shapes and sizes of noses and lips range, hair textures range, body shapes range (and keep in mind that within each of these broad types, variety reigns).

One of the reasons why many in the West find the notion of an African Ancient Egypt so difficult to grasp is that "Africans don't look like that!" In North America, the dominant image of



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Africanity was that of West Africans whose ancestors were bludgeoned into generations of forced labour. But the faces, hair textures and skin tones found on Egypt's ancient paintings and sculptures are common today among neighbouring African populations in Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and even Uganda—all from the eastern side of the continent.

WHEN IT COMES TO Africa's modern face, scars from rape and war, lesions from disease and hollowing of the eyes from starvation have dominated our collective imagination, blinding us to the visages all around us. While the disfigurements are far too often real, they recite to us only chapters of the epic novel. Sierra Leone's many faces have shed far

too many tears, but the face of Memunatu Kamara bears and breeds many smiles. A survivor of Sierra Leone's vicious 1991-1999 civil war, she's the founder of the Tamaraneh Society (misspelled even on the group's website and in the URL as "Tamarineh"). Tamaraneh raises funds in Canada to put over 1000 Sierra Leonean students through school at Tamaraneh's "Alberta, Canada Primary and Junior High School" in Romano Village. With further funding, Tamaraneh plans to open the "Alberta, Canada Health Centre."

"We have many women who are dying in child birth," says Kamara. "We want to have a place where women can give birth to babies, or where seniors who are seriously sick [can get free medical care]. We have over 1000 students, so we need to have a hospital."

Kamara says minimal help comes from a government still ailing from the civil war, and which is concentrating on urban development. In fact, of 15 teachers for Tamaraneh's huge student body, six are actually volunteers. Parents are providing food and other basic necessities for the teachers in a country which "was burnt down to pieces" by a rebel force that destroyed livestock and houses, and raped, mutilated and massacred people. Ten years of civil war left 70 000 dead.

Kamara says she first decided devote her life to the cause of Sierra Leone when she was in a refugee camp, where she was president of the refugees' ad-hoc government. She began advocating for better conditions since "the United Nations built for us only tents. Then we decided to build houses using soil blocks."

On Feb 9, Tamaraneh is hosting its annual "There is Enough!" dinner and development simulation, the proceeds from which will fund their school.

"I know how Sierra Leoneans have suffered," says Kamara. "And I know Canadians are very, very helpful. Many immigrant Canadians have suffered a lot. They know war; this is why Canadians have sympathetic feelings." ▽

Read *Vue* each week in February for columns focusing on African History Month (nbccedmonton.org).

'Suppressed panic' on the climate change frontlines

COMMENT

DYER STRAIGHT

GWYNNE DYER
gwynne@vuwweekly.com

It's an old joke: everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it. The same, unfortunately, is true for the climate.

They are talking about it. They were at it again in Honolulu last week, discussing mandatory, internationally binding commitments on greenhouse gas emissions (although Russia and India refused to allow any mention of that subject in the final statement). At the Bali meeting in December, China even hinted that it might consider something like binding emission caps in the long run. But there is no sense of urgency.

Not, at least, the sense of urgency that would be required to take actions that would invalidate the prediction, in the latest issue of the journal *Science*, that climate change may cost southern Africa more than 30 per cent of its main crop, maize (corn, mealies), by 2030. No part of the developing world can lose one-third of its main food crop without descending into desperate poverty and violence.

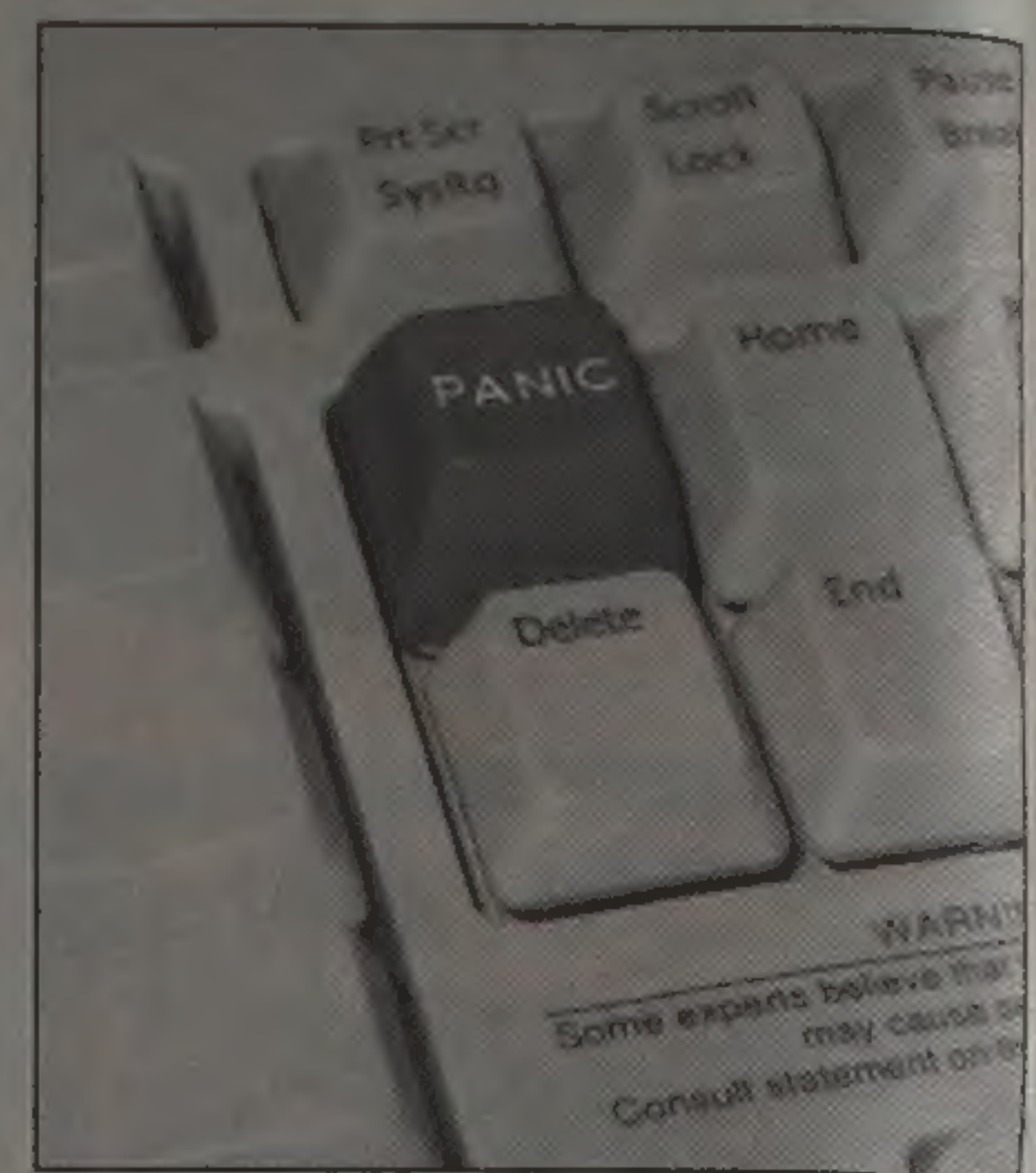
Even some parts of the developed world would be in deep trouble at that point. One part of the developed world, Australia, is already in trouble, with its farmers facing what may be a permanent decline in the country's ability to grow food, although Australia's overall wealth is great enough to cushion the blow. But elsewhere, the mentality of "It can't happen here" persists.

Over the past couple of years, due to a major shift in public opinion, we have arrived at something close to a global consensus that climate change is a major problem. Even George W Bush now says that he is concerned about it. But there is no consensus on the best measures to deal with the problem, even among the experts, and the general public still does not grasp the urgency of the situation.

The two Democratic candidates for the presidency in the United States promise 80 per cent cuts in emissions by 2050, and John McCain for the Republicans promises 50 per cent cuts by the same date, and nobody points out that such a leisurely approach, applied in every country, condemns the world to a global temperature regime at least three or four degrees Celsius warmer than today.

Nobody points out that those are average global temperatures which take into account the relatively cool air over the oceans, and that temperatures over land would be a good deal higher than that. Few people are aware that these higher temperatures will prevent pollination in many major food crops in parts of the world that are already so hot that they are near the threshold, and that this, combined with shifting rainfall patterns, will cause catastrophic losses in food production.

And hardly anybody says that it is going to get really bad as early as 2030 unless we get global emissions down by 80 per cent by 2020, because "everybody knows" that that is politically impossible, and nobody wants to look like a fool. So we must just hope that physics and chemistry



will wait until we are ready to respond.

BUT HERE is a bulletin from the front. Over the past few weeks, in several countries, I have interviewed a couple of dozen senior scientists, government officials and think-tank specialists whose job is to think about climate change on a daily basis. And *not one* of them believes the forecasts on global warming issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change just last year. They think things are moving much faster than that.

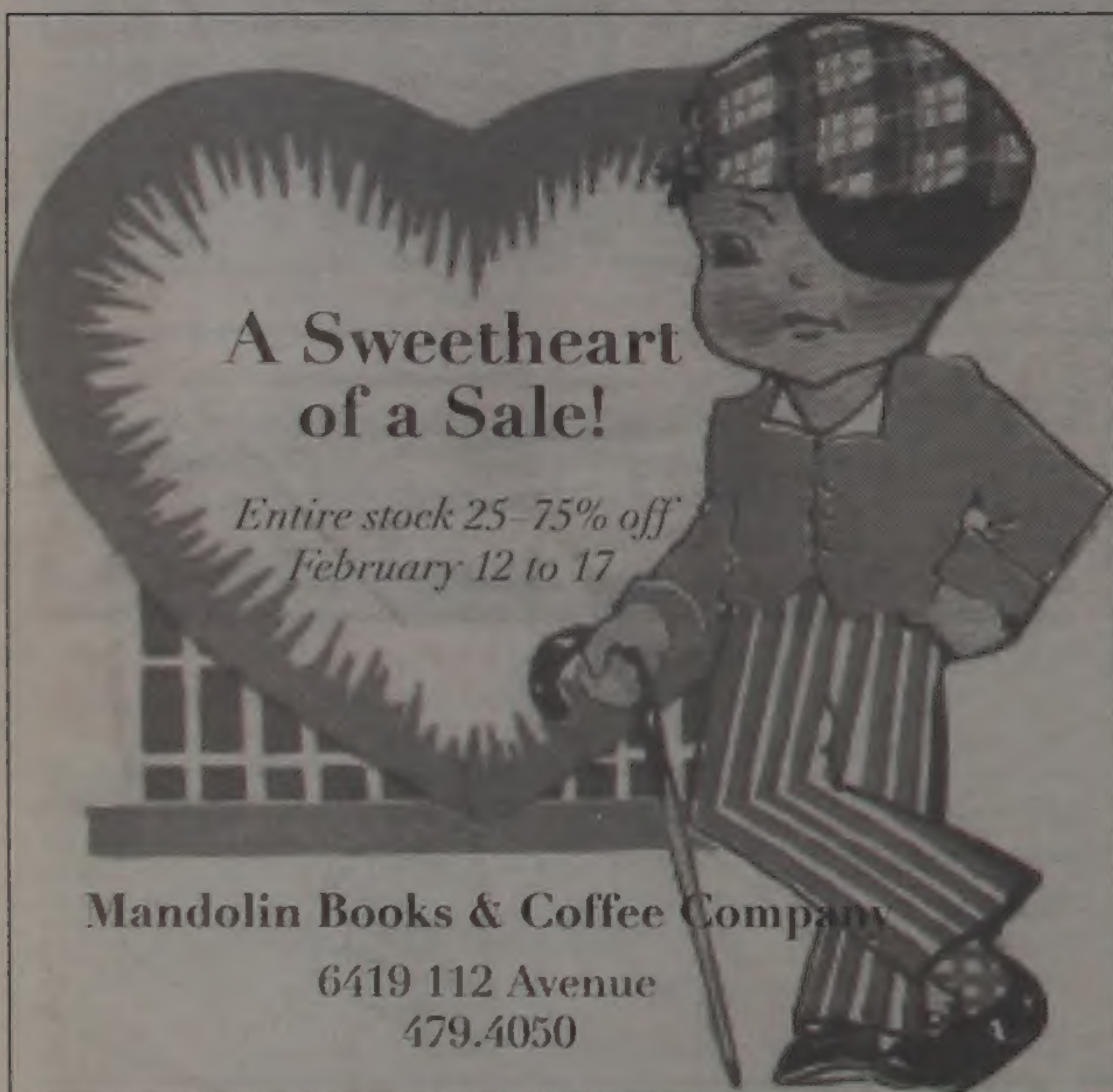
The IPCC's predictions in the 2007 report were frightening enough. Across the six scenarios it considered, it predicted "best estimate" rises in average global temperature of between 1.8 and 4.0 degrees Celsius by the end of the 21st century, with a maximum change of 6.4 degrees Celsius in the "high scenario." But the thousands of peer-reviewed scientific papers that the IPCC examined in order to reach those conclusions dated from no later than early 2006, and most relied on data from several years before that.

It could not be otherwise, but it means that the IPCC report took no notice of recent indications that the warming has accelerated dramatically. While it was being written, for example, we were still talking about the possibility of the Arctic Ocean being ice-free in late summer by 2042. Now it's 2013.

Nor did the IPCC report attempt to incorporate any of the "feedback" phenomena that are suspected of being responsible for speeding up the heating, like the release of methane from thawing permafrost. Worst of all, there is now a fear that the "carbon sinks" are failing, and in particular that the oceans, which normally absorb half of the carbon dioxide that is produced each year, are losing their ability to do so.

Maybe the experts are all wrong, because here in the present, out ahead of the mounds of data that pile up in the rear-view mirror and the studies that will eventually get published in the scientific journals, there are only hunches to go on. But while the high-level climate talks pursue their stately progress towards some ill-defined destination, down in the trenches there is an undercurrent of suppressed panic in the conversations. The tipping points seem to be racing towards us a lot faster than people thought. ▽

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in *Vue Weekly*.



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Link between eating disorders and nutrition

WELL, WELL, WELL
CONNIE HOWARD
health@viveweekly.com

It's Eating Disorders Awareness Week, and this is for the beautiful young women living with the largely closeted heart-break of anorexia or bulimia, and for their families. It's for those so far unable to acknowledge their secret, and for those in psychotherapy or on meds yet again wondering if they'll ever successfully tame the monster, and for those resisting meds because they're not sure the side effects are worth it, and for those who thought they had it licked only to be now ever more protective of their secret.

Not that everyone with an eating disorder falls under that umbrella. Many do find healing with a combination of psychotherapy, antidepressants and/or alternative therapies. But not all do, or they do for a while and then relapse, the dashed hope of relapse sometimes being even more difficult than initial admission of illness.

Both anorexia and bulimia are medical conditions that occur alongside other neuroendocrine, biochemical and psychological loss of balance, making the job of pinpointing cause and finding effective treatment a challenging one.

Eating disorders don't, of course, restrict themselves to young women, but young women make up the majority of those afflicted, and it afflicts more of them than we suspect. And like seemingly everything else, we're developing these things at

ever-younger ages, the average age of onset having dropped from the teen years to the pre-teen years, which coincides with girls reaching puberty at ever-younger ages and putting on weight when they are psychologically ill-prepared to deal with societal pressure to be thin.

But although it is almost certainly exacerbated by the thin-is-beautiful cult that is our culture and the almost-habitual dieting that goes with it, and though the Neanderthals still sending the message that a woman can never be too thin are cruel, whether their toxic energy is directed at a daughter, a lover, or channelled into the beauty industry that says it most powerfully, there is much more to it than that.

BECAUSE WHATEVER THE psychological triggers, eating disorders are biologically sustained when brain systems regulating appetite malfunction. The big question is how those systems can be restored to normal function, but whatever the cause

and whatever the treatment path chosen, our successes will be limited by the availability of basic building blocks for healthy brain chemistry.

What we know for sure is that normal appetite regulation and healthy neurotransmission go hand in hand, and for healthy, non-inflamed neurotransmission to take place, key nutrients need to be available. Given the prevalence of dieting among young women, coupled with the already thin nutritional status of our convenience-food, Coke-preferring (or no-food preferring) young and the thin-ish nutritional quality of much of our food supply, key nutritional deficiencies are all too common.

Some of the most fascinating research with eating disorders has focused on leptin and ghrelin levels, those two little chemicals that regulate appetite, and while we still have much to learn about them we know that appetite-stimulating ghrelin has been found elevated in patients in bulimia research subjects, while appetite-sup-

pressing leptin has been shown to be abnormally low, and we know that intake of high-sugar foods and the absence of key nutrients play a key role in that balance.

Zinc, B12 and omega-3 deficiencies (common among vegetarians as well as dieters and candy-bar lovers) are key nutrients for healthy nerve myelin and serotonin transmission and have been linked to altered appetite control. None of us are exempt from these deficiencies of course, but given that meat and dairy are such solid sources of these nutrients, vegetarians, dieters and those with eating disorders will always be more prone to coming up short.

While eating disorders are more complex than simply changing our nutritional intake, nutritional status is all too often an overlooked but critical component of recovery. Because whatever progress made with improved serotonin transmission or psychotherapy, lasting change is not likely without the essential high-grade fuel required to sustain it. ▼

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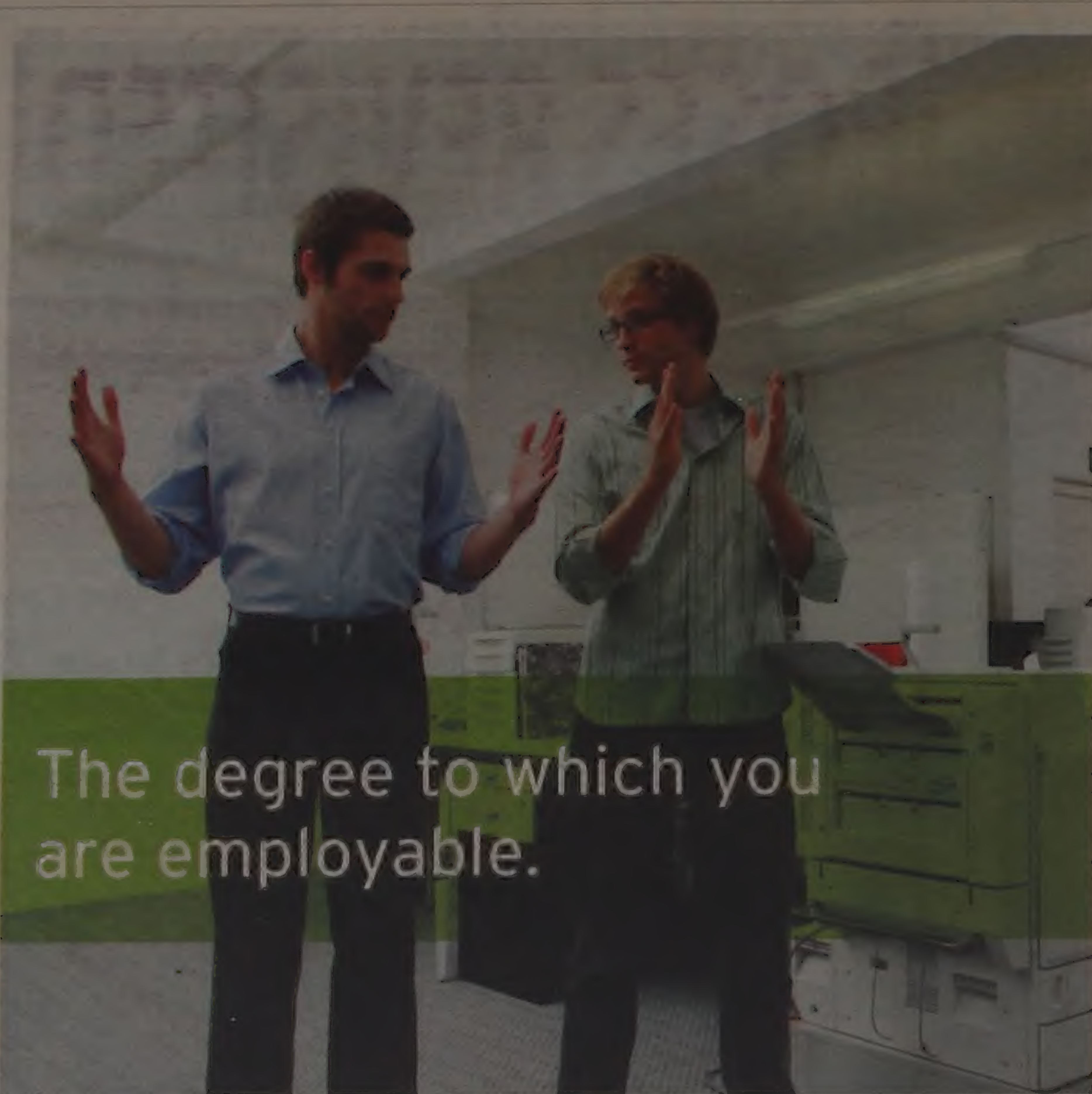
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Public-private partnership plan for schools will end up costing more: CUPE

SAMANTHA POWER / samantha@vancouverweekly.com

A provincial union representing over 8000 education workers in the province says that the provincial government needs to re-think plans to build more than a dozen new schools through a new private financing scheme, charging the plan will ultimately cost the province more money.

The Alberta government announced on Jan 30 that it is moving ahead with 14 new schools financed through public-private partnerships (P3s). The scheme will see private companies contracted to take out private loans to design and build the new middle and high schools in Edmonton and Calgary.

Alberta Education representative Kathy Telfer explained that the deal was undertaken to expedite the process of design and construction. "The traditional model focuses on a one-off approach of design and construction. We need an innovative way to get schools built quickly and efficiently."

But the Canadian Union of Public Employees Alberta president D'Arcy Lanovaz said the long-term implications of P3s will outweigh any short term benefits. "These projects don't make financial sense. We lose the accountability and transparency of the process."

Lanovaz said he is urging the provincial government to look at the negative experiences of private financing models from other jurisdictions, pointing specifically to the example of Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia's experience with P3s in the mid-'90s resulted in school construction falling behind schedule, a private contractor that couldn't deliver and greater costs to the provincial government. The P3 project was stopped after the Conservatives came to power when a report by provincial auditors found contracts were not signed before development began and various financial irregularities in the agreements.

But Telfer countered that she doesn't believe the Nova Scotia model is comparable to the plan here in Alberta.

"The Nova Scotia model left ownership in the hands of the construction company. These schools will be owned and operated by the school boards in Alberta."

NEWS | P3 SCHOOLS

But Lanovaz is concerned over the lack of transparency in the contracting process.

"They're signing a contract with the private sector. We never get to see the contract because of proprietary information, so we never get to see the full scope. It's left to the private sector to make a lot of determinations about our schools."

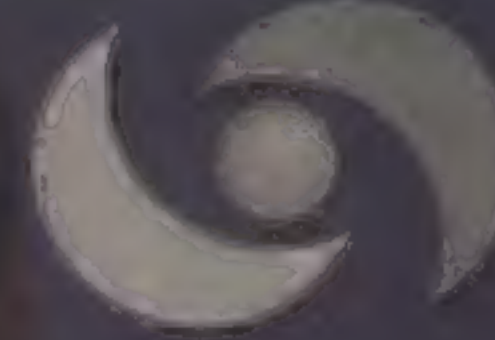
Advocates of the public-private partnership model believe contracting private companies to take out private loans to construct public services saves the government money. The government makes regular payments to the company for the life of the contract, but none of it appears as debt on the government's budget. These plans are often undertaken by governments whose budgets are in the red.

So Lanovaz can't understand why a government with a budgetary surplus of over three per cent of GDP and the best credit rating in the country would outsource its financing for a public sector project.

"There is no company that has a better credit rating. For the Alberta government to say we're going to pay to get someone else to get the financing on that level alone it doesn't make sense."

Lanovaz points to a recent report released by CUPE, "Doing the Math: Why P3s for Alberta Schools Don't Add Up," which specifically studied P3s in an Alberta context and found that for every two schools financed using the P3 model, an additional school could be built if the conventional public sector financing model was used. The report compares private sector lending rates with the traditional public sector funding model to reveal that a public-private partnership results in a greater cost to the provincial government.

"Alberta is desperate to get new schools. We've left the building of schools far too long and we've got a massive population influx. We are well aware of the urgent need for new education facilities. But let's do it in a financially responsible way." ▽



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Issues is a forum for individuals and organizations to comment on current events and broader issues of importance to the community. Their commentary is not necessarily the opinion of the organizations they represent or of the Weekly.

Children and families in the province face worsening crisis

RHONDA BARRACLOUGH / whocaresalberta.com

Who cares when there is no one there to help? That is the question that community agencies who support children and families in crisis throughout Alberta have been asking the provincial government to address for the past six months.

There are hundreds of community agencies that receive contracts from the provincial government to run vital social services programs. Thousands of people are employed providing care to people with disabilities, working with families in crisis, running women's shelters, providing home supports to young families and providing programs for people with HIV.

The problem is that for years the contracts that are provided by the government have not allowed the organizations to pay the competitive wages necessary to attract and retain qualified staff. With Alberta's rapidly growing population and high inflation, the demands on these agencies have grown at the same time that qualified staff people are leaving non-profit agencies for other fields or are going to do similar work for the government at much higher salaries.

A recently conducted survey of member organizations of the Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families demonstrated that the staffing crisis faced by these community agencies is worsening. The survey shows that staff vacancy rates among surveyed agencies were 18.8 per cent (620 vacancies), a significant increase over 2006. The survey also indicated that agencies had a staggering turnover rate of 19 per cent in just six months, and that fully one-third of agencies had definite concerns about their ability to honour their contracts, while another 34 per cent were beginning to have the same concerns.

The Who Cares Alberta? campaign has asked people to write to the premier and their MLAs to tell their personal stories about the reality of what this crisis means for them. To date, 511 letters have been sent, some with very heart-wrenching personal accounts of the human impacts of this crisis. Here is one recent example of what people are saying: *For the last 14 years I have been able to support my daughter, who requires care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I want the government to know that I do not consider this a burden but a blessing. I am grateful that I have been able to provide care for her, I love my daughter and want the best for her. I am 72 years old ... when our last weekend lady quit, it took four months for the agency to find a caregiver to fill the position. Please explain to me why the government of Alberta is not paying adequate wages to the care givers who provide help to individuals who have disabilities?*

And another: *My cousin suffered a brain injury about 24 years ago. She was an unwilling participant in this life-changing event. For years now her Mom and Dad have looked after her at home. The problem is that they are in their 70s and the task of looking after my cousin is a huge load for them as they get older. If my cousin were in the hospital or extended care the cost would be far greater than at home. I ask you to go to the aid of this family and help them to find the financial and moral support they need to keep my cousin at home and for them to remain a family. Please suggest to the government that keeping people at home is far more cost effective than at an extended care, and that we must always show compassion for our fellow Albertans that are in a situation where they are not able to help themselves.*

AS YOU CAN SEE from the above letters, this crisis is having a serious impact on families, the existing caregivers and on society as a whole. But who can we work together to come up with a truly



long-term solution to this crisis?

The advocacy campaign has been successful in raising the awareness of the crisis with different levels of government and in the media. The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association passed a strong resolution at their annual convention recognizing the crisis and calling on the provincial government to provide more support to community services. Other organizations like the United Nurses of Alberta see the impact this is having on people are joining in and supporting the campaign.

In November, the premier announced an additional one-time investment of \$26.1 million to support children and youth, adults with developmental disabilities and other vulnerable Albertans. The purpose of these funds was to help recruit and retain staff. While appreciated, it is simply not enough. This \$26.1 million represents between a three and five per cent increase for most frontline staff, which is the same as the current rate of inflation. Unfortunately, many organizations have been told that they can not give salary increases as the money may not be there next year, so they have to give these funds out as one-time bonuses.

To top it all off, a number of organizations have been presented with contracts for next year with no increase at all. The Boys and Girls Clubs of Alberta are deeply concerned about the need to cut some of their programs or reduce the number of children they can help. The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters is also deeply concerned about their new contracts, as they feel no increase in pay will make the crisis even worse. Last year, the women's shelters had to turn away 27 000 women and children who were looking for refuge from family violence because they did not have the room to support them. How many more families will not get the help they need as this crisis worsens?

We have just begun a provincial election, so now is the time to raise this issue with all political parties. Go to the whocaresalberta.com website to learn more about this issue and send your letter or story into the premier. You can also go democracy.alberta.ca to see how the various parties are responding to questions on this issue. Finally, plan to attend the election forum on this issue at the Provincial Museum, Thu, Feb 21 at 7 pm.

Show you care by helping to support this campaign. ♥

Rhonda Barraclough is the executive director with the Alberta Association for Services for Children and Families.

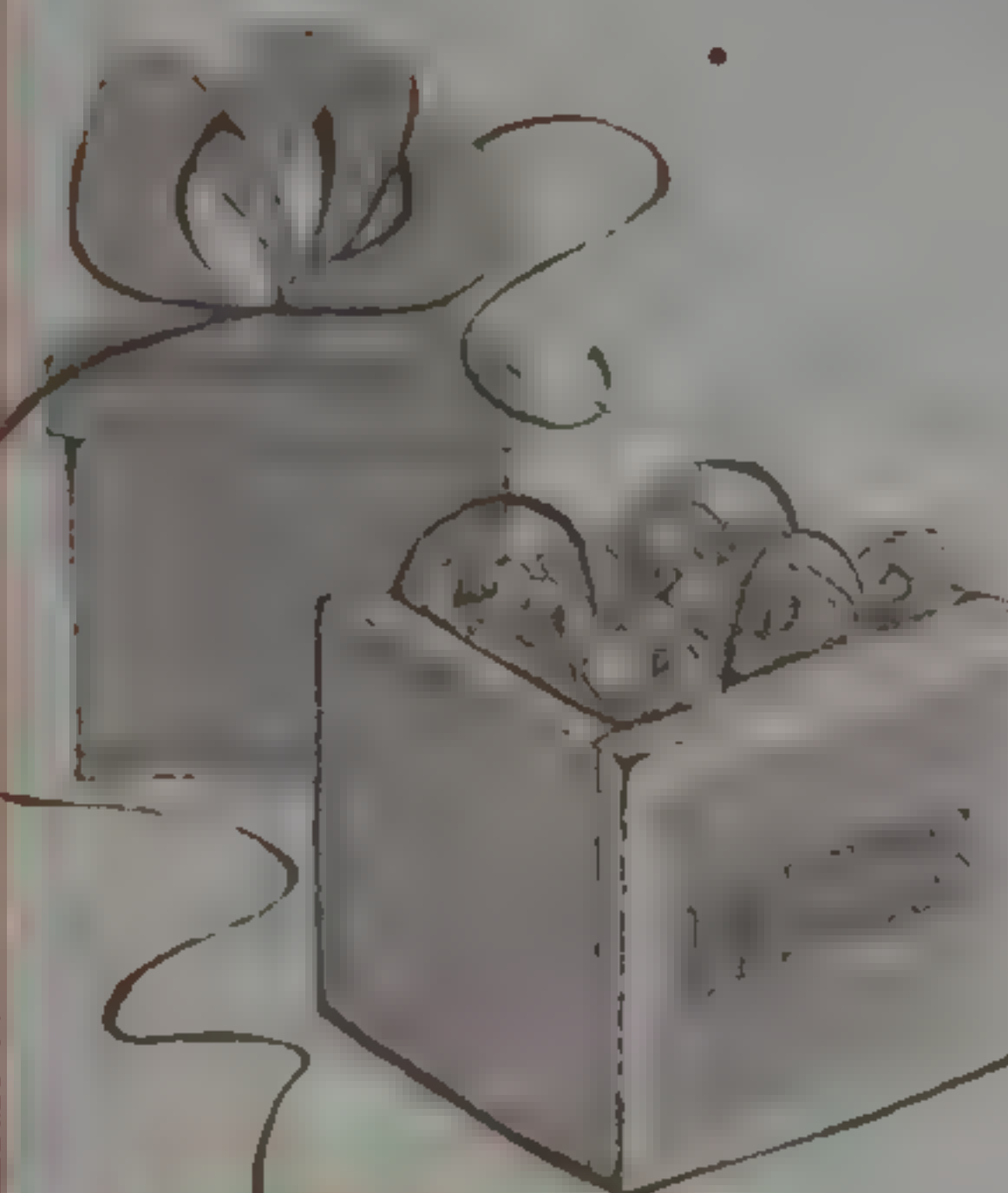
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Serendipity (or Satan) is to blame for this decades-long D&D draw

GAMES INFINITE LIVES

The infinite, fantastic worlds of *Dungeons & Dragons* adventures hold countless mysteries. Where is the fabled Sceptre of K'Ronaak? What new infamy is the evil wizard plotting, deep in his blasphemous subterranean lair? What do I have to roll to successfully seduce the tavern wench? For me, though, the greatest mystery will always be the first: how did I discover D&D in the first place?

The simple answer is, I found it when I was around 10 or 11 years old, in the downstairs guest-bedroom closet, right there with the backgammon board, the circular plastic rack of poker chips and dad's beloved old *Monopoly* set. But what was it doing there, that '79-edition Basic Set, still in its shrinkwrap? Neither of my

parents recall buying it; they didn't even know what it was when I asked them. And yet, somehow, it was there for me, like something out of a creepy Ray Bradbury story.

That wicked dragon on the cover, snarling atop his glittering hoard! The doughty man-at-arms and the pointy-hatted wizard ... and in the corner: The ORIGINAL ADULT FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING GAME. Adult! Fantasy! Inside, pages and pages of arcane rules, mysterious charts and totally rad drawings, the secrets of "The Keep on the Borderlands" and two sheets of random-number chits to carefully cut out and use instead of polyhedral dice. However the game reached me—courtesy of Satan, maybe?—I knew I'd found my home.

From those early days of childish dungeon-furnishing (my first encounters with words like "arras" and "dais," behind and on which lurked impossible dangers) through my first actual gaming

sessions with like-minded schoolchums (Helix the fireball-flinging half-elf learns the hard way the difference between "radius" and "diameter") and into the golden years of college gaming where I found a perfect harmony of drinking and dicing ("Fuck it; I punch the horse!"), I kept the faith. Sure, I flirted with other role-playing systems, *GURPS* and *Hero* and such, even straying so far as to dabble in hippified "collaborative storytelling frameworks" that sniffed at bourgeois concepts like "dice" and "rules," but I always stayed current with *Dungeons & Dragons* through all its editions and permutations.

THIS SUMMER, publisher Wizards of the Coast is releasing the fourth edition of *Dungeons & Dragons*, and the fans are being a bit bitchy about it: after all, it's only been four years since they bitched about having to shell out for "Edition 3.5," an update released only three years

after the advent of third edition, which they also bitched about—basically, D&D manuals are like university textbooks: you've got to budget a couple hundred bucks a year to stay current.

My own relationship with the game has been almost entirely in my mind for a while now, existing only as anecdote and daydream. It's been maybe 10 years since I played an actual D&D session, not counting a couple of drunken one-offs that collapsed into chaos, but still my rulebooks are scattered about. I've been re-reading the 3.5 core set, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide* and *Monster Manual*, in the bathtub for the last two months, absorbing. The cosmology is alive in my head, character concepts gestating in an amnion of crunchy-nerd optimization—"If I leveled a Druid to where he could cast *Barkskin* and then changed to the Monk class ..."—and new campaign ideas evolving as I soak. I've got the fever, bad.

So what happens in a few months when it's two in the morning and I'm drunk, staring at the listing for D&D Fourth Edition on Amazon.com, fiddling with the PayPal button? On the one hand, it's a totally unjustifiable splurge; I'm living in a very small town now, on the tooled-leather edge of the province, Bible Belt, and the chances of getting into a group without having to drive an hour each way to Calgary are pretty slim.

On the other hand, who knows? The chances of finding that first boxed set in my parents' house were so slim as to be nonexistent, my introduction to the hobby some kind of weird miracle; even if I can scrape a group together around here, even if the campaign I'm planning—think "The Temple of Elemental Evil" meets open-pit mining—never gets out of my head and on to graph paper, I feel bound to pay my dues.

Bree-yark, Wizards of the Coast, bree-yarkin'-yark. ▼

Katz in, Horcoff out

HOCKEY IN THE BOX

DAVE YOUNG AND TB PLAYER
inthebox@vancouverweekly.com

With only two games last week (we don't count Wednesday night games as *Vue* is being printed) the Oilers faced two long-time rivals and wound up with two completely different results. The Dallas Stars came to town Feb 1 and beat the Oilers 4-1 despite being outshot by the "good guys" 33-22. Feb 4 saw (ack) Calgary come to Rex-all and the Oilers hammered the Flames 5-0.

EATING OUR YOUNG Brand-new Oiler acquisition Curtis Glencross (traded from Columbus in exchange for Dick Tarnstrom and his salary) had his first game as an Oiler Feb 4 in the shutout win over (ick) Calgary. He certainly won't change the Oilers fortunes but he arrived with the kind of good vibes that make some Oilers sentimental fan favourites. He plays with some grit, isn't afraid to fight and has distinguished himself as a hard working and energetic player. He fought against Calgary and laid a few hits. He's also an Alberta product, growing up near Red Deer. That may not bode well for GlenX as Alberta players have not exactly been treated like favourite sons in Edmonton. Think Mike Comrie, Brad Isbister, Joffrey Lupul, Cory Cross and Jason Chimera—all served up to Oiler fans and coaches to devour and spit out. DY

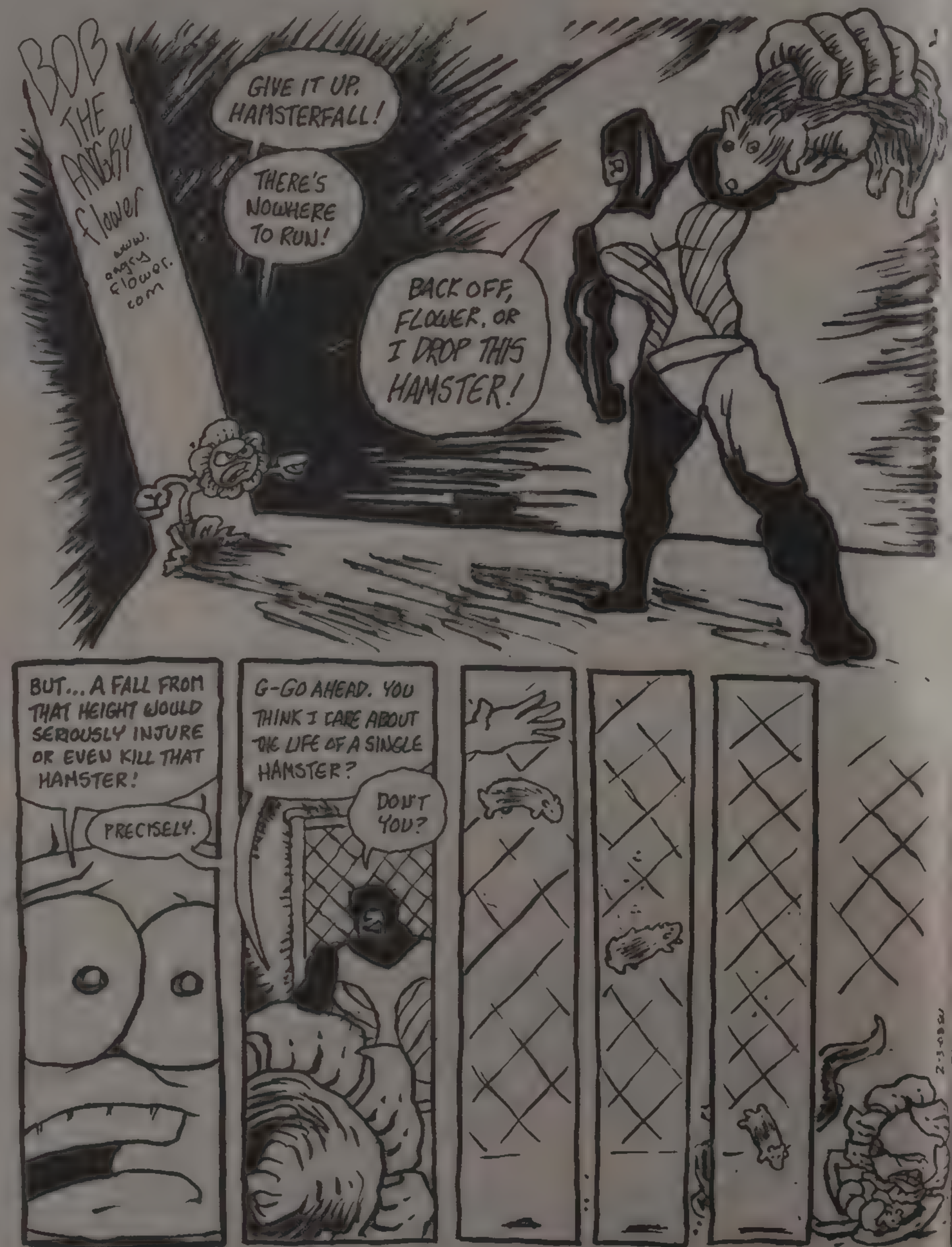
ONE MAN ARMY It's a done deal. Daryl Katz is the new owner of the Edmonton Oilers. And I for one would like to welcome our new billionaire overlord. All kidding aside, this deal makes nothing but sense for all involved. The investors group gets a tidy return on their original investment, Katz gets the Oilers, and the team itself can begin to move in a new direction. Some new blood and new energy. Possibly a new arena. But in all this, I think that it's important to remember what the investors group did for our city: geography being what it is, Edmonton could have very well been crawling with Flames fans if the group hadn't stepped up and kept the Oilers here. And

for that, I will be forever grateful. TB

ONE HUNDRED GAMES OF SOLD-OUT-TUDE? Friday, Feb 1 marked a new milestone for the Oilers with the 100th consecutive regular season sellout in Rex-all. The sellout games stretched from Nov 29, 2005 until the Dallas game on Feb 1. The team even thought the moment deserved a quick ceremony and a "100 Sellouts" banner in the corner of the rafters. Oddly enough, that milestone would have been achieved at least 20 games earlier as that November game in 2005 against the San Jose Sharks was only 256 seats shy of a full barn. The Oilers were riding a 20 game sellout streak before that blip. DY

EATING HER WORDS Monday night's BoA game had a blooper moment with an untimely F-bomb dropped on the jumbotron. In-house carnival barker Mark Scholz was firing trivia questions to a seemingly innocent girl in an Oiler jersey. It went something like this: Scholz: "Who played John Rambo in the movies?" Potty-mouth: "um ... um ... wait! Sylvester Stallone! Fuck!" Needless to say, she was embarrassed, Scholz was flustered/amused, parents hoped the younger kids weren't listening and the moment passed. Let's keep the swearing on the ice where it belongs. DY

ONE HURTIN' UNIT Well, the chances of a post-season for the Oilers took a big ol' nosedive this week with the announcement that Shawn Horcoff will miss the rest of the season due to injury. Mr Horcoff, who currently leads the Oilers in scoring, represented the team at the All-Star game, and travels under the alias "The Fastest Man Alive," will undergo shoulder surgery at his earliest convenience. Which is inconvenient for a team that has had trouble finding scoring of any kind. The Oilers have now passed the 200 game mark in man-games lost this season, and may still find their way to the 286 games they lost last season (an NHL record). The big chunk of salt in this enormous sucking chest wound is that the Oil's first pick is going to Brian "Cranky Pants" Burke in Anaheim, and it looks like it could end up being a pretty good one. TB





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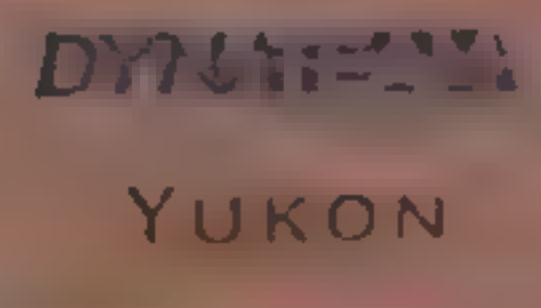
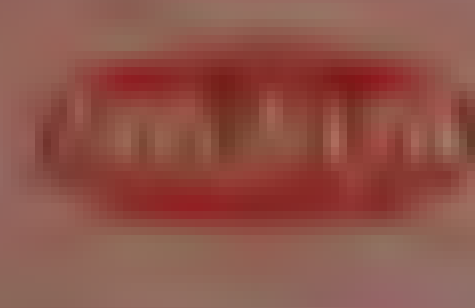
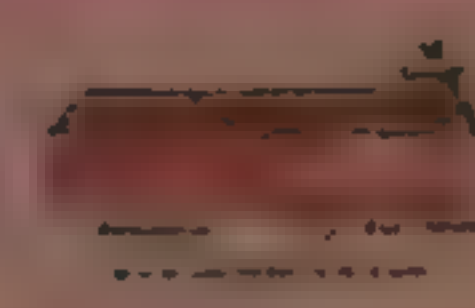
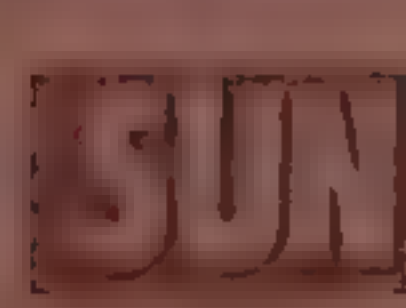
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In Birkie races, not all goes as planned

A MEMOIR OF THE 2007 NORWEGIAN BIRKEBEINERRENNET



GAIL WOZNY / special to Voe Weekly

In the weeks leading up to my 2007 dream trip to Norway to compete in the original Birkebeiner cross country ski race, I anticipated all the interesting, heart-warming and fun experiences I was bound to encounter. It seemed that all I would have to do is just go there, do as I'd planned and the amazing adventures would just happen.

As is often the case in travel, things did not go as planned, and the theme of my trip turned out to be much different than I ever anticipated.

I've participated in the Canadian Birkebeiner for the past 15 seasons; the full 55 kilometre Birkie with pack, the Birkie Lite without pack and the 31 km shortened Birkie. Two years ago, a friend and I zipped down to Wisconsin and completed phase two of the triple Birkebeiner crown: the American Birkebeiner. Eventually I started setting aside a portion of my salary so I could take a year off to pursue various goals, most importantly, the Norwegian Birkie.

I started my journey to Lillehammer, Norway on Mar 11, 2007, accompanied by one friend. After an overnight pit stop in Oslo we took the train to Lillehammer and settled into our hostel accommodations. We were impressed with the beauty of this small town of 1900, nestled in the

surrounding mountains.

We were also amazed by the realization that this charming little town actually hosted the 1994 Olympic Games! It doesn't take long to realize that those Olympic Games have had a huge effect on the psychology and character of the town. You see the remnants everywhere, from the logos and artwork all over town, to the world class sporting facilities. The best part is the fact that the locals are still bursting with pride over what a great event it was and are eager to share their stories.

WE HAD A COUPLE OF DAYS before the race to get used to the surroundings and figure out how we would wax our skis for the big day. We went for a couple of skis; one from the Olympic biathlon course, five km from downtown, and one from the lovely cross country ski resort, Sjusjøen, located 20 km from town. Both areas were easily accessible by public transit, which is the norm everywhere in Norway where the bus system is, fast, easy and efficient.

The evening before the race, we took a bus to Rena, where the start line is located. Even though Rena is only 50 km away, it was a two-hour bus ride winding through mountainous territory. We picked up our race packages and made our way to our

NORDIC ADVENTURE

"accommodation," a classroom in a school, with foam mattresses for beds in a room shared with 25 other participants. Stepping over a bunch of snoozing skiers at 2 am to go to the washroom was definitely a challenge.

Our sketchy sleep was made up for by a morning full of promise. The sun was out, the sky was blue and the trails were groomed to perfection. Conditions were ideal for a fast, exciting day. When my friend and I got to the start area, we were overwhelmed by the massive congregation of skiers. Thirteen thousand participants were in the area, and the energy was electrifying.

The first two of 20 starting waves were already off when we arrived and we watched in amazement as four more waves of skiers took off at five minute intervals, each one the size of our entire Canadian Birkebeiner. I was putting horrible Klistar wax on my skis, when an older Norwegian gentleman stepped in and simply took over for me. He had my skis waxed to perfection in no time. I thanked him by giving him a Canada pin and waited for more waves to start.

An announcement came over the scratchy broadcast system that there were very strong winds high in the

mountains and that the remaining starts were being delayed by 30 minutes. I grew concerned that with the delay I would get too hungry waiting around. Our starting wave would not be going for over an hour now and breakfast at the school was already a long time ago.

I made my way to a tent area to buy a couple of extra energy bars. While in the tent I started to chat with a group of American and Canadians who were hanging out together. One man from New York could speak Norwegian so we gathered around him every time there was an announcement. First he translated that all the skiers on the course had been sent back because of the wind. I'm really going to need those energy bars, I thought.

Mr New York speculated that the race would be called off. I must have turned as white as a sheet because he said optimistically, "Don't worry, we'll just see you next year. I've got a cabin here and you can come stay with us."

"No," I explained, "I've saved for five years and took a year off work to do this. I won't be coming back next year." Suddenly the crowd became eerily silent as another announcement came over the intercom. A flurry of movement and chatter erupted as Mr New York translated what I already knew: the race had been cancelled. I just stood there in complete shock. In the 70-year history of the Norwegian

Birkebeinerrennet, it had never been cancelled on race day.

EVENTUALLY, I WENT back out to find my colleague. All I could say first was, "I can't talk about this." We gathered up our gear and joined the huge exodus of people clogging the single narrow road that took us back to the town centre of Rena. Once there we joined thousands of others who had no clue what to do next. Organizers would have to arrange for buses to take everyone back to Lillehammer. This was obviously going to be a long wait. A few of us went to a grocery store, stocked up on morale-lifting beer, bread and chocolate and proceeded to hunker down in a back alley for a little impromptu (and illegal) picnic of sorts.

As much as I wanted to wallow in my misery, my fellow travellers refused to let me. After making our way back to Lillehammer, we partied well into the night. It was St Patrick's Day and the skis were lined up outside Paddy's Pub in the centre of town like horses hitched outside a western saloon.

Many months have passed since that ill-fated day, and although duller now, the sting of disappointment is still there. I can now see way into the future, though, and that one day I'll be back on the line in Rena. ▽

Thigh-burning Pano vertical meets both World Cup and recreational needs

STEVEN KENWORTHY / steve@vuwweekly.com

Rocky and mountain. Boots and bindings. Chair and lift. They are familiar word associations for most skiers, but there's another that should come to mind: racing and Panorama.

While it's certainly not all the BC mountain resort has to offer, racing is a big part of what butters Panorama's bread. As the official race training centre for Alpine Canada, Panorama Mountain Village is used extensively by national ski teams from around the world as well as provincial, regional and private clubs. Each November before the resort opens to the public the lifts run for a few weeks exclusively for race teams that come for early season training.

With a perfect fall line for races, intensive snowmaking (over 40 per cent of the mountain) and a huge vertical drop, Panorama seems naturally designed for the gatecrashing segment of the ski population. During a recent visit in mid-January, the snow on the upper sections of the mountain was a race organizer's dream—flat and solid. I'm packed is a generous description of the overall conditions at least on the lower half, and sharp edges were a must for cruising on the lightening-fast groomed runs. Juvenile races were taking place alongside the top portion of the Mile 1 Quad, the main lift out of the village, and another kiddie's race was held on the bottom half.



THE PANORAMA

Yes, Panorama was in midst of another busy race season, maybe its busiest ever since it kicked off earlier and bigger this winter with a pair of World Cup races in November.

Those were the first women's World Cup giant slalom and slalom races to be held in Canada since 1986. The event represented somewhat of an arrival on the world racing scene for Panorama.

"There are very few World Cup venues available in the world," explains Brad Brush, Panorama's director of

mountain operations. "Lots of other places don't have the facilities, lifts, lodging and all [the other essentials for staging a race]."

Staging a World Cup race is a venture not necessarily about immediate profit—Brush says the verdict is still out on whether any was even made—but more about exposure. "A lot of it

revolves around the media and who is watching. It gets Panorama's name out there and the races were going on when we weren't open to the public yet so it was a good fit."

IT TOOK YEARS OF lobbying by Alpine Canada to convince skiing's international governing body, the Federation Internationale du Ski (FIS), to hold a race at Panorama and both the resort and Alpine Canada are hoping all that work was not for a one-time only event. Nothing is certain as the FIS only makes one-year commitments, but there is a push to bring races to Panorama annually at least until the 2010 Olympics, says Roc Spence, a long-time Alpine Canada volunteer and the chair of the World Cup races in Panorama.

"We put together a compelling case to the FIS to have these races to help train people for the Olympics. The resort was tremendously supportive in making the course and venue suitable for world-class competition. The Columbia Valley came out to support it and the community embraced the event—those things are critical to the FIS."

Spence also points to Panorama's location as a major factor in its popularity as a race destination. The relatively short three-and-a-half hour drive from a major airport in Calgary (a six to seven hour trek from Edmon-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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PANORAMA

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ton) is part of the appeal, but the climate may be even more important. "Western Canada is one of the few locations in the world that can ensure proper early season conditions for World Cup training and races," he said.

The Panorama races also set a precedent as, for the first time ever in World Cup history, two World Cup events for different genders were held on the same weekend at different locations on the hill. It put a strain on the volunteer pool as well as the safety equipment, said Spence, but Panorama was able to partner with Kimberley Alpine Resort to borrow equipment from its Paralympic training centre.

As part of a long-term commitment to high-end training and races, last spring Panorama even committed exclusive space and a dedicated run on which permanent racing safety facilities will remain in place all season long.

IT'S ALL PART OF an entrenchment of racing at Panorama, something the resort is proud of but not something it wants to see take away from families and recreational skier and snowboarders. For the non-racers, the top portion of the mountain is Panorama's best feature. The view and the skiing are both something that should be experienced. Scenic towering Rocky Mountains surround you, and the aptly-named

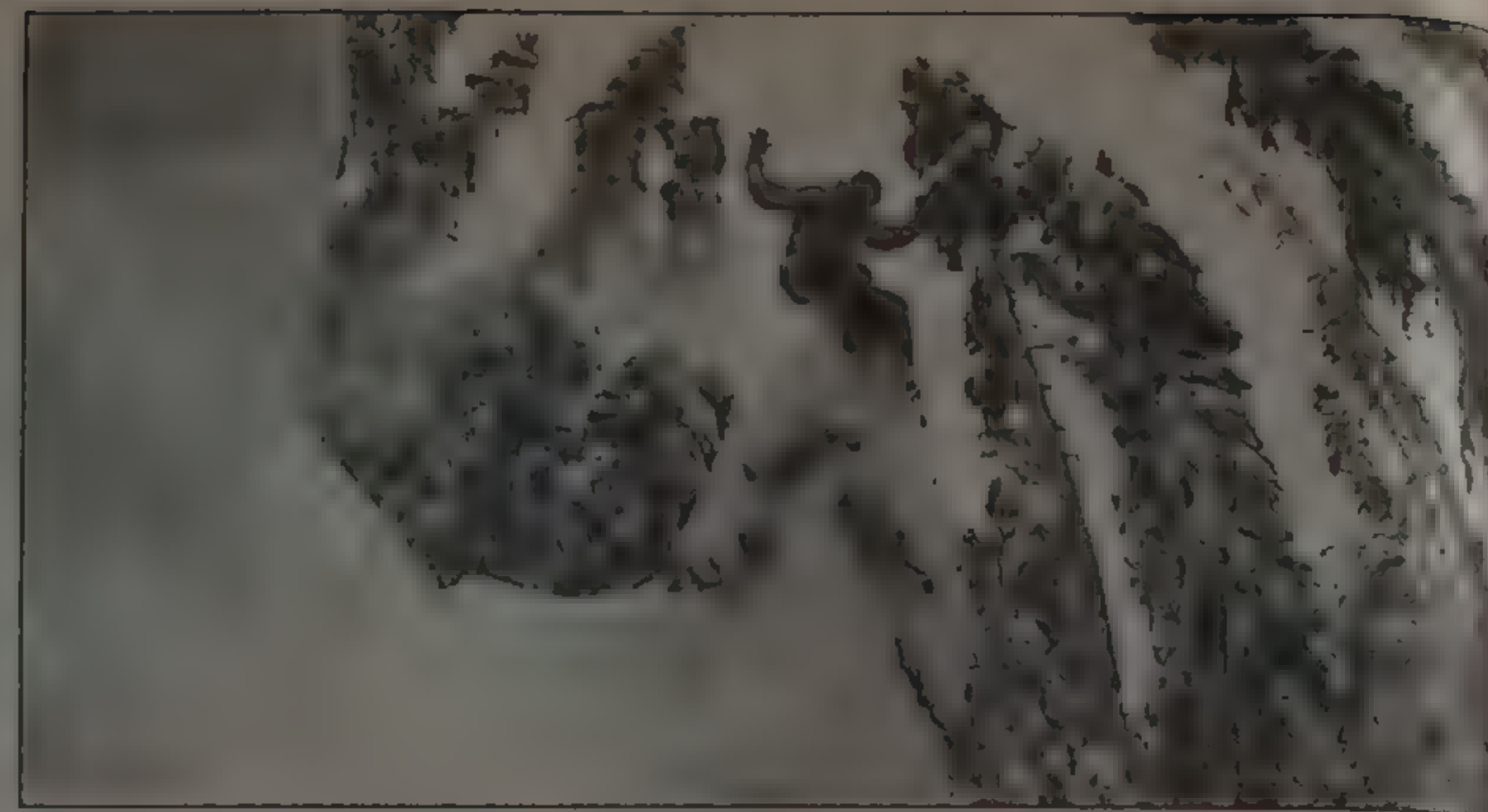


View of 1000 Peaks area is one of the most beautiful sights you'll see anywhere. Taynton Bowl and the Extreme Dream Zone offer more challenging, off-piste riding and the incredible vertical rise of the place, one of the highest in North America at 1200 metres, makes a top to bottom run both an adventure and a thigh-burning workout.

The resort's focus is not always on racing and after the early season glut of training and racing events, Panorama becomes considerably more playful. Promotions like "Ugly Sweater Day" and "Mocktober Fest"

take place in December and January as part of the Big Five weekends, a series of themed weekends that show Panorama's lighter and loonier side. The final of this year's Big 5 weekends took place Jan 26 when all the Sheilas and Mates decked themselves out for Australia Day.

So don't let the racing emphasis fool you—Panorama is big enough to get away from it all even on the busiest of weekends and there's no shortage of fun to be had both on and off the slopes. A racer's dream doesn't have to be a recreational skier's nightmare. ▼



NARSID silent but deadly

COLIN WISEMAN / colinw@vancouverweekly.com

The mountains are an inherently dangerous place. Even in the controlled environment that exists at public ski resorts, there are variables that cannot be controlled. Ultimately, skiers and snowboarders are responsible for their own safety and a lift ticket doesn't negate sound decision-making. With recent avalanche activity at ski resorts across the Northwest—including inbounds incidents at two British Columbia hills—the risk of avalanche danger has re-entered the collective consciousness. But avalanches are actually one of the lowest risks you face on the ski hill.

Although less spectacular, the danger—especially inbounds—of a phenomenon known as Non Avalanche Related Snow Immersion Death (NARSID), is just as daunting as avalanches according to a recent report by Paul Baugher, director of the Northwest Avalanche Institute. In the report, titled "Risk Trends at US and British Columbia Ski Areas: An Evaluation of the Risk of Snow Immersion Versus Avalanche Burials," Baugher notes that roughly the same amount of deaths occur inbounds every year from NARSID as from avalanches—both inbounds and beyond the ropes—at Northwestern ski resorts.

NARSID is responsible for far more inbounds deaths than avalanches every year. Since 1991, there have been only five inbounds avalanche fatalities in Western North America compared to 51 asphyxiation deaths related to inbounds deep snow immersion—10 times the fatalities of avalanches. Coupled with a "steadily increasing" risk of NARSID related deaths as more people venture into deep snow off the groomed trails, NARSID is a safety concern that must be recognized by skiers who like to challenge their skills off-piste.

NARSID happens to snowboarders twice as often as skiers. And while it can occur simply from burial in an open slope, there is usually sufficient space to move when one finds themselves upside down in an open powder field. The major risk associated with NARSID is presented by tree wells, which account for 65 per cent of NARSID fatalities.

When snow falls in the trees, the branches create a canopy that deflects the snow and prevents it from building up at the bottom of trees. Thus, while the snowpack may be deep and sufficiently bonded

SAFETY

around trees, it can remain loose around tree trunks and create a pit underneath the branches.

When skiers or boarders fall into a tree they can easily fall into the tree well—an occurrence that can have disastrous consequences if no one sees them go in. Suspended upside down, there is little snowboarders can do to get out of their bindings and remove themselves from the tree well. And, furthermore, snow loaded on tree branches may fall in on top of the rider, burying him and cutting off his flow of oxygen. Unable to move, the rider has little chance for survival without assistance. Thus it is imperative to follow a few simple rules when riding trees.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, it is important to ride with a partner. Staying within sight of one another while skiing trees greatly increases the chances of your partner seeing you should you go down, and pulling another rider out of a tree well usually isn't too complicated.

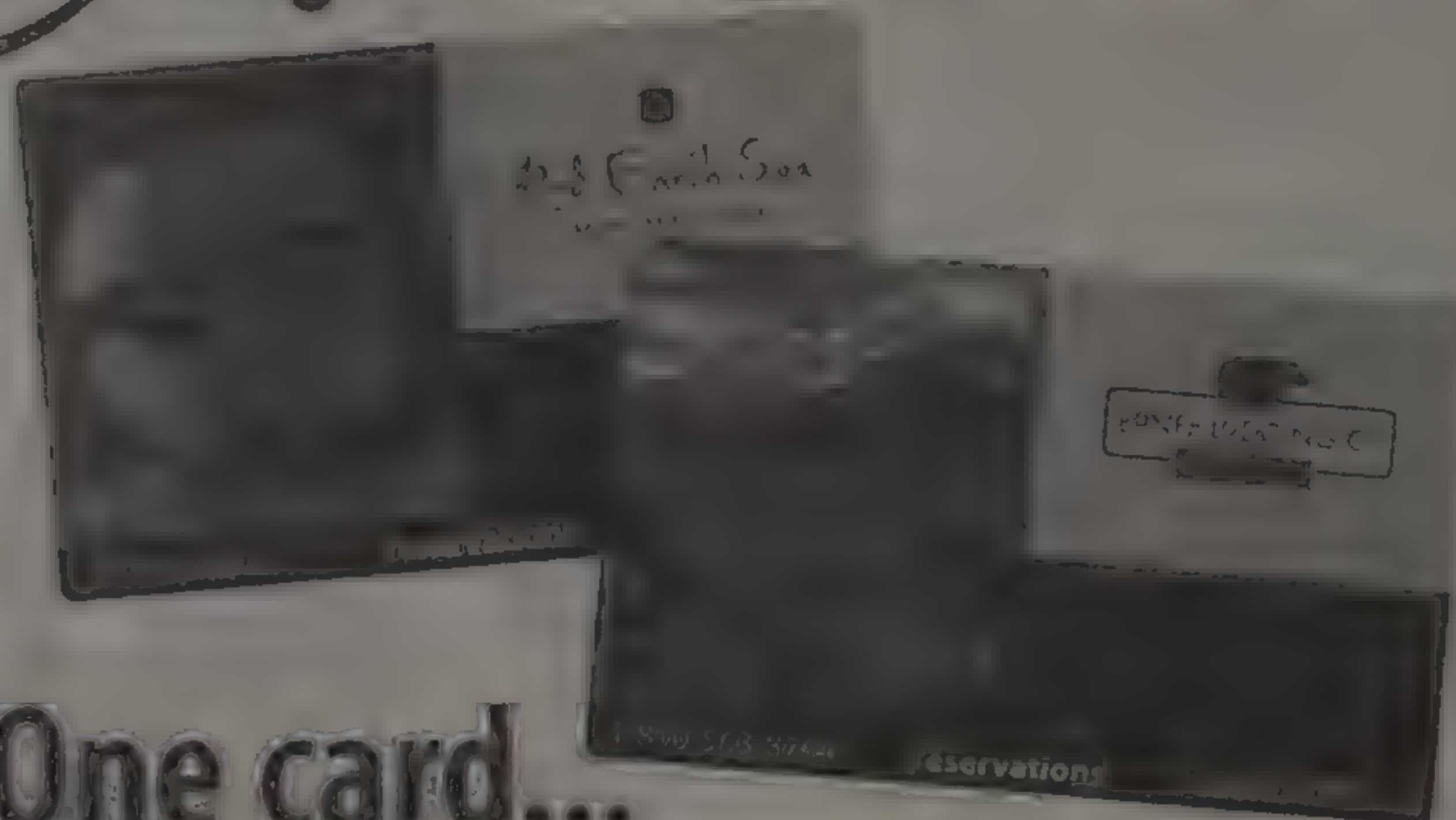
If you should find yourself stuck in a tree well it is also important not to panic—in a recent study, 90 per cent of people buried could not free themselves, and struggling actually lead to further difficulties breathing and getting out when assistance arrived. If you do see someone go down, get the person out yourself—death can occur as quickly as drowning in water, so quick recovery is essential. If you follow these simple rules and stay within sight of one another, you should be able to pull out your partner or be rescued yourself.

Skiing deep snow through the trees is one of the most enjoyable parts of skiing and boarding for many, myself included. NARSID only accounts for 25 per cent of total deaths inbounds (with the majority being due to impact) and if the right steps are taken, the risk of NARSID can be greatly reduced. Learning about NARSID shouldn't scare you away from skiing the trees. Rather, it should make you more aware of the dangers you face when out in the mountains and how to avoid them. If you ski within sight of a partner, you can enjoy deep snow and tree skiing safely. ▼

For more information about NARSID, its causes, and ways to avoid it, please visit treewelldeepsnowsafety.com.

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Picture yourself on a pogo to make it through the pow pow

SNOW ZONE

SKI TIPS

KEITH LIGGETT
keith@vuwweekly.com

This season has blessed many areas with an abundance of powder so far, but skiing powder plays tricks with normal ski technique. Off the groomers, in the trees or in a steep bowl of untracked pow, we find our normal manner of turning doesn't cut it. Something is off.

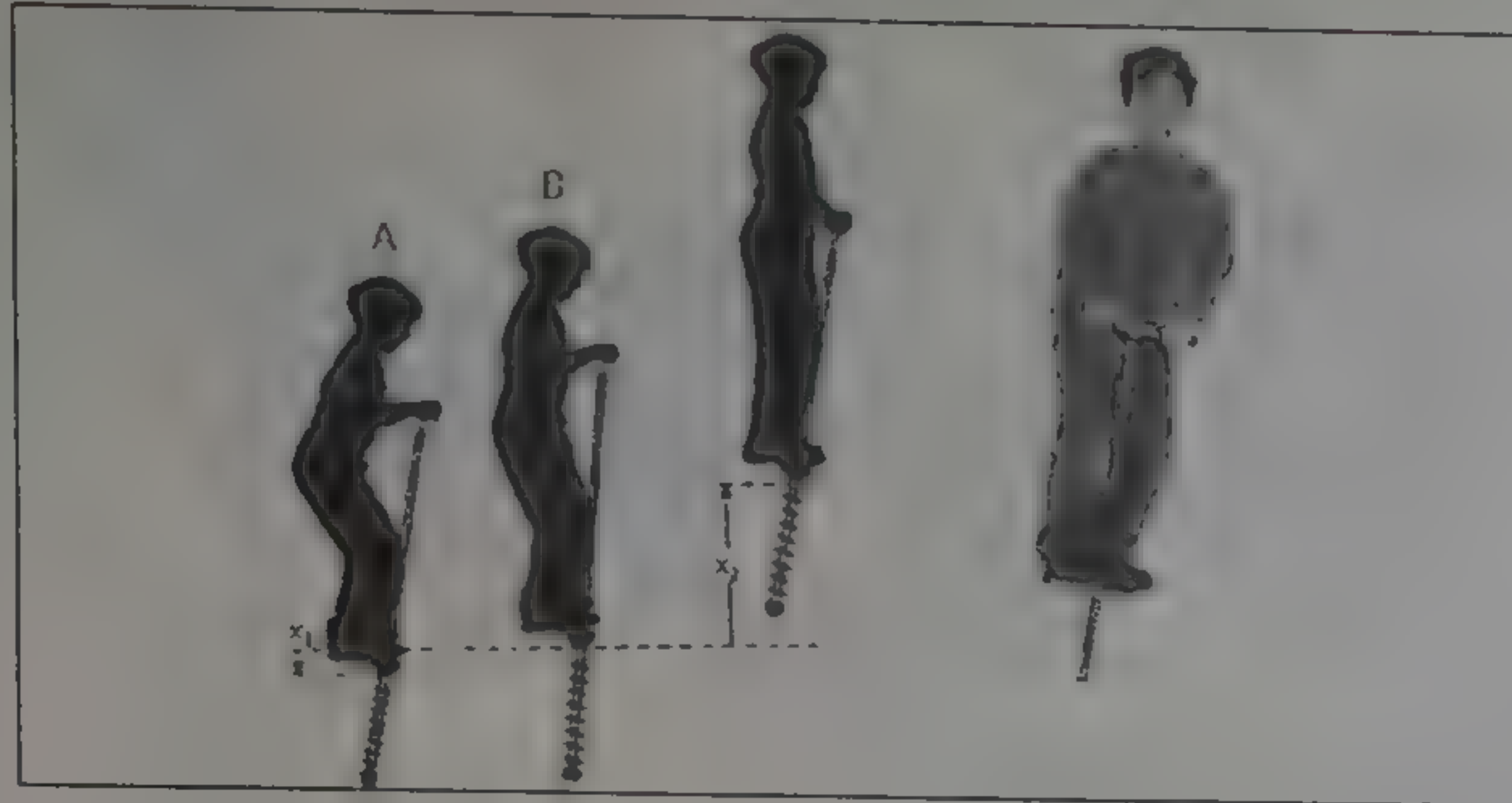
Most of us, at one time or another, played with a pogo stick, bouncing back and forth, seeing who could stay up the longest. Once settled into a rhythm, it was almost impossible to fall off. Break that rhythm and everything fell apart instantly. Steep powder skiing draws on the same skills we played with as kids on a pogo stick. Really.

Next time you stand at the top of a

steep slope of powder, stop for a second. Stand, arms relaxed at your side, close your eyes and visualize a warm day. A friend comes over with a brand new pogo stick. You step on it and immediately start bouncing ... boing ... boing ... boing.

As you visualize the bouncing, actually start bouncing a little in place. Feel the bounce, drop into the bounce. Then without losing the bounce, open your eyes and, maintaining the same rhythm, start down the hill. Move your feet side to side still on the pogo stick. As it gets steeper, bounce quicker. As it flattens, bounce a little slower. Bounce hard, the turns become tighter and slow you down. Bounce lightly, the turns open up and you speed up.

While it seems silly, this visualization exercise really works for a number of reasons and on a number of levels. First, in skiing powder, rhythm is everything. It keeps you turning, it keeps you moving through the snow and it keeps you skiing



down the fall line. Loose the rhythm and you start to traverse—and traversing is the worse thing you can do in powder. Getting a turn out of a traverse is like twisting a nut rusted to a bolt. Tough.

Second, rebounding from power sets you up for the next turn. Like the pogo

stick, bouncing off of one turn into the next then bouncing off of that turn into the next.

Third, the pogo stick centers you on your skis. On a pogo stick you stand on the balls of your feet. All athletic activity, and all skiing, leads off the balls of your

feet. You react and move only from the balls of your feet.

Fourth, the bouncing rhythm of a pogo stick eliminates the possibility of hesitation. Hesitate and you fall. In powder, hesitation leads to more speed, more wonder about where to turn and eventually to the big biff.

Fifth, like on a pogo stick, keep your head up and watch where you are going. Don't watch your skis. Your skis are there, that's why you have bindings. Watch ahead. Head up and bounce.

Lastly, don't sit back on your skis. Stay centered. Remember what happens on a pogo stick if you lean one way or the other? You go that way. If you lean back, you go back. Don't do it. Stay Centered.

Next time you're having a bit of difficulty in the pow, try the pogo stick. Take a moment and go back to a sunny day in your childhood—and bounce your way down the hill. ▼

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Stand up and be counted among the Birkie warriors

CHRISTIE SCHULTZ / christie@vueweekly.com

"Are you skiing the Birkie?"

Before I started cross-country skiing, putting the question to me would have led to a raised eyebrow and a look that clearly stated that "Birkie" was not part of my personal lexicon.

Learning that the Birkie is the insider's name for the Canadian Birkebeiner, the largest classic style loppet (recreational ski race) in Canada, is one of the rights of passage of every neophyte nordic skier.

NORDIC | THE SKINNY

Actually skiing in the thing is another matter altogether.

The Birkie, held annually at the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area, celebrates the legend of two Birkebeiner warriors who rescued the infant king of Norway in the year 1206, skiing over 55 kilometres of mountainous

terrain until the wee one was safe.

This year's event on Sat, Feb 9 will see approximately 2000 skiers take part in the 21st anniversary of the Canadian Birkebeiner, skiing distances of 55 km (with or without a pack), 31 km, 13 km (the Mini Birkie), 5 km or, for the kids and novices who want a taste of the finish line, 2.5 km.

Since I'm not quite ready to attempt the long distance Birkie myself, I asked Edmonton Nordic Ski Club's Mike Stern,

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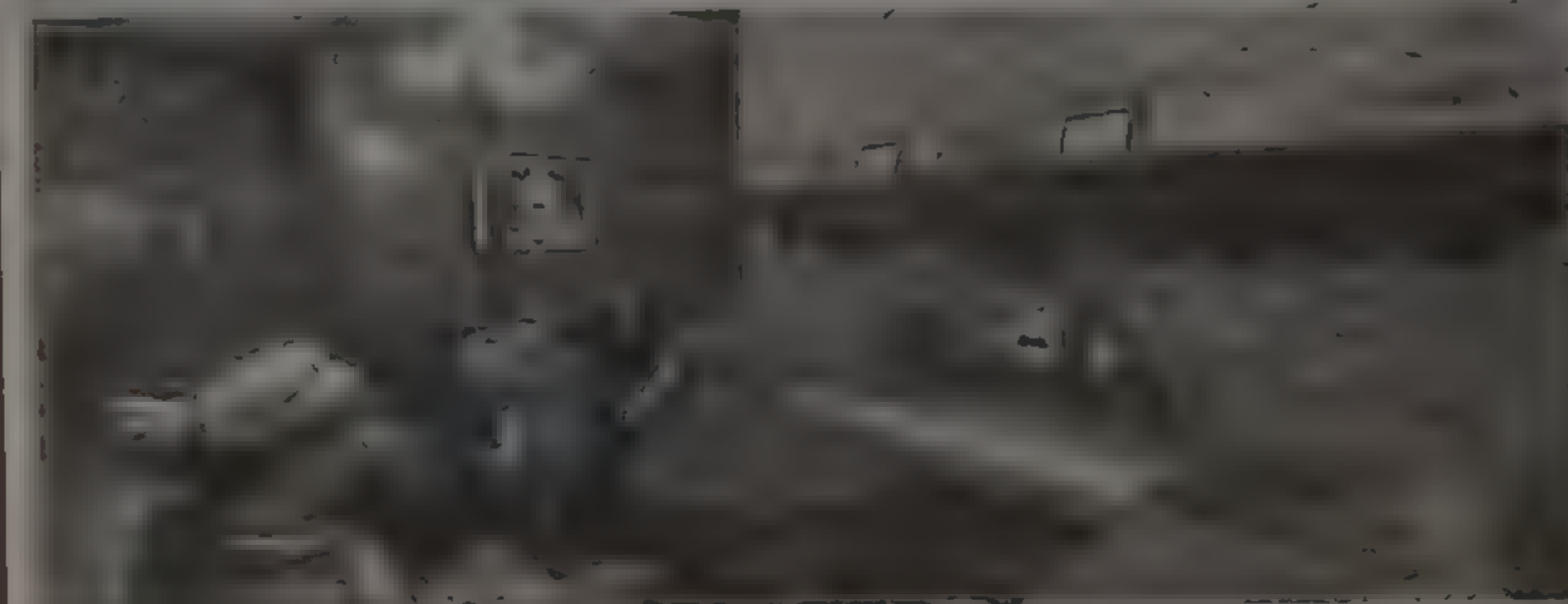
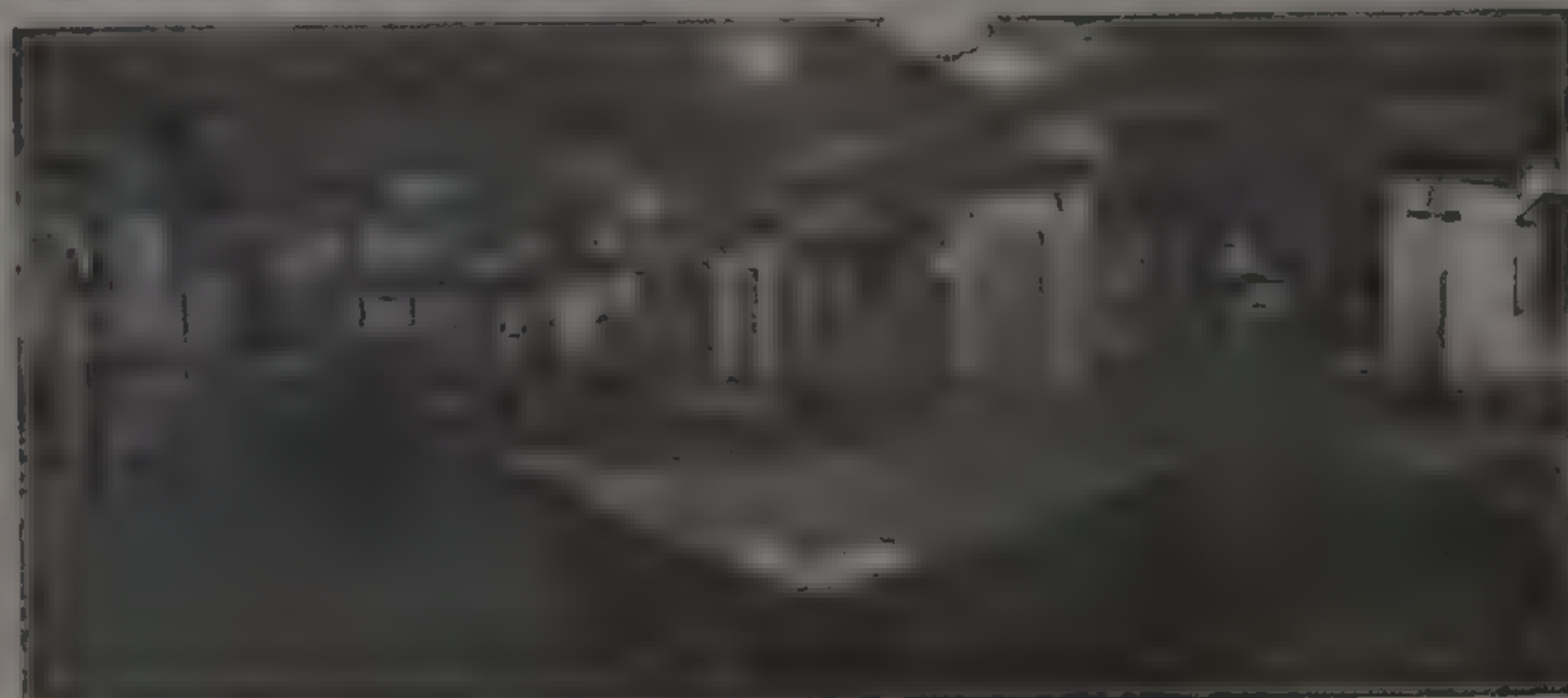
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skiing in his 11th 55 km Birkie, and Daniel Robb, age 19 and skiing his first 55 km Birkie, for their thoughts and advice.

"Unless people are novice skiers, I don't usually recommend that they enter the 13 km event because it is so crowded and the distance is too short for the field to spread out," says Stern. "For an intermediate skier, the 31 km would be a better event despite the greater distance."

While 13 km, the distance from downtown Edmonton to Ikea, may be enough of a challenge for many, both Stern and Robb suggest that training is the key to getting ready for the longer distances.

"Every weekend, I've been out at Blackfoot doing longer distances, getting in as many miles as possible," notes Robb. "The trails this year are in excellent condition and many people are out training enjoying the snow."

Stern offers a simple mathematical method for estimating training requirements. "My rule of thumb for training is to have skied approximately 10 times the distance you plan to race," he says. So, if you plan to ski the 31 km race, you'll need

to have logged about 310 km before race day. Going for 55 km? You'll need 550 km.

While the reasonably fit may be able to get away with less, entering some of the other loppets in Alberta can be very useful training for the Birkie. Stern recommends the 30 km Tawatinaw loppet held near Westlock on the weekend before the Birkie, definitely something to plan to do if you're already planning to participate in the 55 km race next year.

In other words, if you haven't been training yet, the five km or 2.5 km events might be the ones for you. Conveniently, those are the only two races for which you can register on race day.

FOR ANYONE WHO HAS logged the necessary pre-race kilometres, you'll also want a few tips for race day. In addition to skiing in the 55 km race, Stern is also the touring and loppet coordinator for the Edmonton Nordic Ski Club. Here are his top five tips:

1. Make sure you get your grip wax right. At the nordic fair, the day before the race, take time to chat to the various waxing experts. Listen to their advice, mix in

your own experience and wax your skis accordingly.

2. Make sure you place yourself on the starting grid according to your ability. If you start too close to the front, you may be forced to go faster than you should or you might be overtaken by a lot of faster skiers, which gets depressing. If you place yourself too far back, slower skiers can hold you up and it takes more effort to get by them.

3. Have a game plan based on your ability, experience and fitness. If conditions allow, stick with the plan. In other words, know in advance how far you should be able to ski each hour.

4. Don't get too caught up in the hype at the beginning or you may go out too fast and burn yourself out prematurely. Pace yourself.

5. Most importantly, always drink some liquid at each of the aid stations to avoid becoming dehydrated. Even on a cold day, you will sweat a lot.

IF YOU'RE LOOKING for a reason to dive on in to the Birkie experience, Stern emphasizes that you see people of all abilities entering, from elite skiers to casual recreational skiers who want a bit more of a challenge. "It has a really nice atmosphere," he says, "and people can do quite well in their age group, if they have done enough training."

Robb agrees. "I would recommend doing the Birkie to anybody who is a nordic skier," he says. "The trails are always perfect and the food at the end always tastes so good. It makes for a really fun day."

For anyone who would like to check out the event this year without skiing, consider pitching in as a volunteer. There's also a Nordic Fair at Festival Place in Sherwood Park on Fri, Feb 8 from noon until 8 pm where you can get advice and product demos.

Ready to ski the Birkie, Robb offers one more piece of advice. "Every year, a couple of the national team members fit the Birkie into their racing schedule," he notes. "So, if you're passed by several guys in flashy spandex, you don't need to try and keep up. Just go out and have fun."

See canadianbirkie.com for more information. ▽

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Vancouver insider's guide to local hills

RON YAMAUCHI / rony@vancouverweekly.com

If you're getting a little tired of snowshoeing from your car to your home, you might be thinking of coming to **Vancouver**. And since you're reading this section, you're also wondering about where to catch some good slopes.

This is your quick guide to the local mountains of Vancouver. While Vancouver has convinced the Olympic site selection committee that Whistler is just next door, it's not local unless you can be on the hill in an hour. That leaves Cypress, Seymour and Grouse.

Your Vancouver Reporter sorts them as follows:

CYPRESS MOUNTAIN

Web: cypressmountain.com

Summary: long runs, in short time

Adult day pass: \$50

YVR went to Cypress on a day when it was snowing. Though visibility was poor, the fresh powder was wonderful—until the snow gods decided to switch to hail, which is like skiing while being peppered with buckshot. Pending next year's massive upgrade, the facilities are small and spread-out, which actually gives it an enjoyably

RIDE | COASTAL

quaint, old-timey feel. It feels like another world from the congested beehive that is Metro Vancouver.

Cypress has 50 runs, the most of any local mountain; nine are brand-new this year. It also boasts four quad chairs, making for shorter lift lines, and the Longest local runs—over 2000 vertical feet, which isn't Whistler but ain't bad either. The biggest drawbacks are the rustic cafeteria and distance between chairs.

MOUNT SEYMOUR

Web: mountseymour.com

Summary: deepest and steepest

Adult day pass: \$39.50

YVR went on a lovely clear day, bright and cold. It was perfect for taking pictures but not the best for skiing, unless you enjoy face-planting on ice. I could have done without it. Still, this is a favourite mountain of mine, and when there's fresh snow, you get great control plus genuinely angst-inducing speed. What makes it good is an abundance of challenging terrain and lots of variety

packed into a small footprint, including two freestyle parks. There's also free race coaching every Thursday night. The facilities are limited, though, with only two and a half chairlifts and all double-so lift lines can be busy at times

GROUSE MOUNTAIN

Web: grousemountain.com

Summary: tourist's choice

Adult day pass: \$47

This is the place where YVR would not feel guilty parking a nice relative who giving you a ride and just wants to hang out while you hit the slopes. There's a lot to do here besides board or ski, starting with the scenic Skyride tram up from the parking lot to the hill. Grouse has excellent dining options with spectacular views. Other tourist attractions include Theatre in the Sky, a grizzly habitat, a skating pond and the Sno-Limo. Drawbacks here are the crowds, making for busy slopes, and the occasional wait in the rental shop

Vancouver is a busy city filled with people; the next time you're here you might want to consider what the local hills can offer as a nice escape from the downtown crowds. ▼

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CONDITIONS REPORT

Local

Rabbit Hill — 60cm base, no new snow. All runs and lifts open.
Saw Valley — 60cm base, no new snow. All runs and lifts open.
Sun Ridge — 60cm base, 10cm new snow. All runs and lifts open.
Edmonton Ski Club — All runs and lifts are open.

Alberta

Canada Olympic Park — 100cm base, no new snow.
Castle Mountain — 119-290cm base, 10cm of new snow. 5 lifts and 61 trails open.
Lake Louise — 161-168cm base, 21cm of new snow. All lifts and 126 runs open.
Marmot Basin — 99cm base, no new snow. All lifts and 82 runs open.
Mt. Norquay — 60-85cm base, 3cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.
Nakiska — 86-97cm base, 11cm of new snow. All lifts and 26 trails open.
Sunshine Village — 164cm base, 18cm of new snow. All lifts and 101 runs open.
Tawatinaw — 60cm base, 10cm of new snow. All lifts and 23 runs open.

B.C.

Apex — 189cm base, 40cm of new snow. 3 lifts and 67 runs open.
Big White — 238cm base, 37cm of new snow. 15 lifts and 105 runs open.
Fernie — 315-325cm base, 18cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.
Kicking Horse — 174cm base, 30cm of new snow.
Kimberley — 140-163cm base, 8cm of new snow. 5 lifts and 80 trails open.
Mt. Washington — 435cm base, 35cm new snow. All runs open.
Panorama — 80-117cm base, 3cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.
Powder King — 235-335cm base, 65cm of new snow.
Red Mountain — 180cm base, 8cm new snow. All lifts and runs open.
Revelstoke — 196-211cm base, 3 lifts and all trails open.
Silver Star — 123-193cm base, 28cm of new snow. All lifts and 114 runs open.
Sun Peaks — 140-192cm base, 20cm of new snow. 12 lifts and 122 trails open.
Whistler/Blackcomb — 244cm base, 49cm of new snow. 23 lifts and 126 groomed runs open.
White Water — 243cm base, 11cm new snow. All lifts and 11 runs open.

U.S.A.

49 North — 229-315cm base, 25cm new snow. 3 lifts and 68 runs open.
Big Sky — 251cm base, 20cm of new snow.
Crystal Mountain — 183cm base, 45 runs, 7 lifts open.
Great Divide — 102-127cm base, 3 lifts and 80 runs open.
Lookout Pass — 292-417cm base, 23cm new snow.
Mt. Spokane — 229-330cm base, 23cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.
Schweitzer Mt. — 239-350cm base, 15cm new snow. 8 lifts and 70 runs open.
Silver Mt. Resort — 183-305cm base, 28cm new snow. 7 lifts and 72 runs open.
Sun Valley — 135-236cm base, 10cm new snow. 13 lifts and 87 runs open.

All conditions accurate as of Feb. 6, 2008

Golden weekend on the slopes for Canada

SNOW ZONE
MONS

FALL LINES

HART GOLBECK
hart@vancouverweekly.com

Last weekend in Deer Valley, Utah, Davey Barr of Whistler BC stood with three others in the starting gate of the first World Cup Skier Cross event in North America. Along side were two time X Games Skier Cross champion Casey Pucket, Daron Rahlves, the most successful US Alpine downhiller, and Michael Schmidt from Switzerland.

Sixty seconds later, after manoeuvring a treacherous course of banked turns, rollers and flats, Barr was first across the line. A significant accomplishment considering this event will make its Olympic debut two years from now near Barr's training grounds. Many of the 2010 Olympic Alpine events will be held up at Whistler, but the Skier Cross will be closer to Vancouver on the slopes of



Cypress Mountain. Later that night and on the same mountain, Canadian Vincent Marquis beat American Landon Gardner in the dual moguls final. This was Vincent's first victory, but he's definitely rounding into form after a second place finish on the previous weekend.

There was more good news for Canada across the Atlantic when Fernie BC native Emily Brydon captured her first

World Cup gold by winning the Super G race in St Moritz, Switzerland. This was Brydon's first gold and it was ever sweet after a serious knee injury two years ago nearly derailed her World Cup career. The rest of the world got off lucky because I'm sure Canadians would have won many more medals last weekend, but several World Cup races were cancelled by heavy snowfalls in the French Alps.

Epic snow at Castle Mountain and Fernie Resort

SNOW ZONE
MONS

FALL LINES

HART GOLBECK
hart@vancouverweekly.com

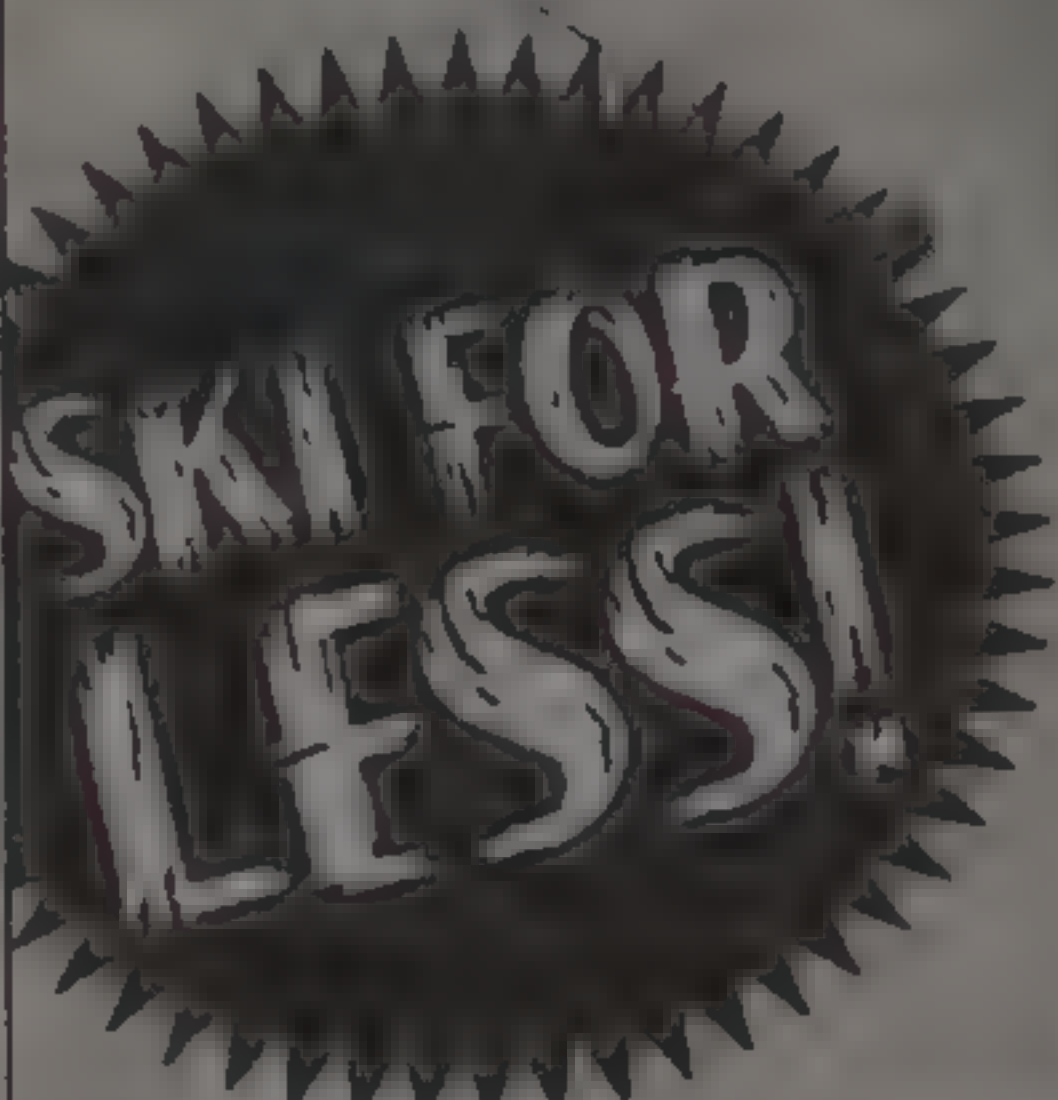
In the past week Castle and Fernie have been snowed under and skiers and boarders can't believe their fortune. At

Castle Mountain, 207 centimetres of snowfall has been recorded and Fernie is not far behind, registering 170 cm on the measuring stick. With temperatures not nearly as cold as what we've been getting, these two resorts are definitely worth checking out. You know it's going to be a great day when drive up to the resort and a sign informs you of a

short opening delay on some lifts and runs because the avalanche boys are out doing their job getting the hill stabilized. As luck would have it there was even a Powder Eight competition at Castle last weekend. Talk about perfect timing, and for the first time in many years any slope would have been just fine to record the event.

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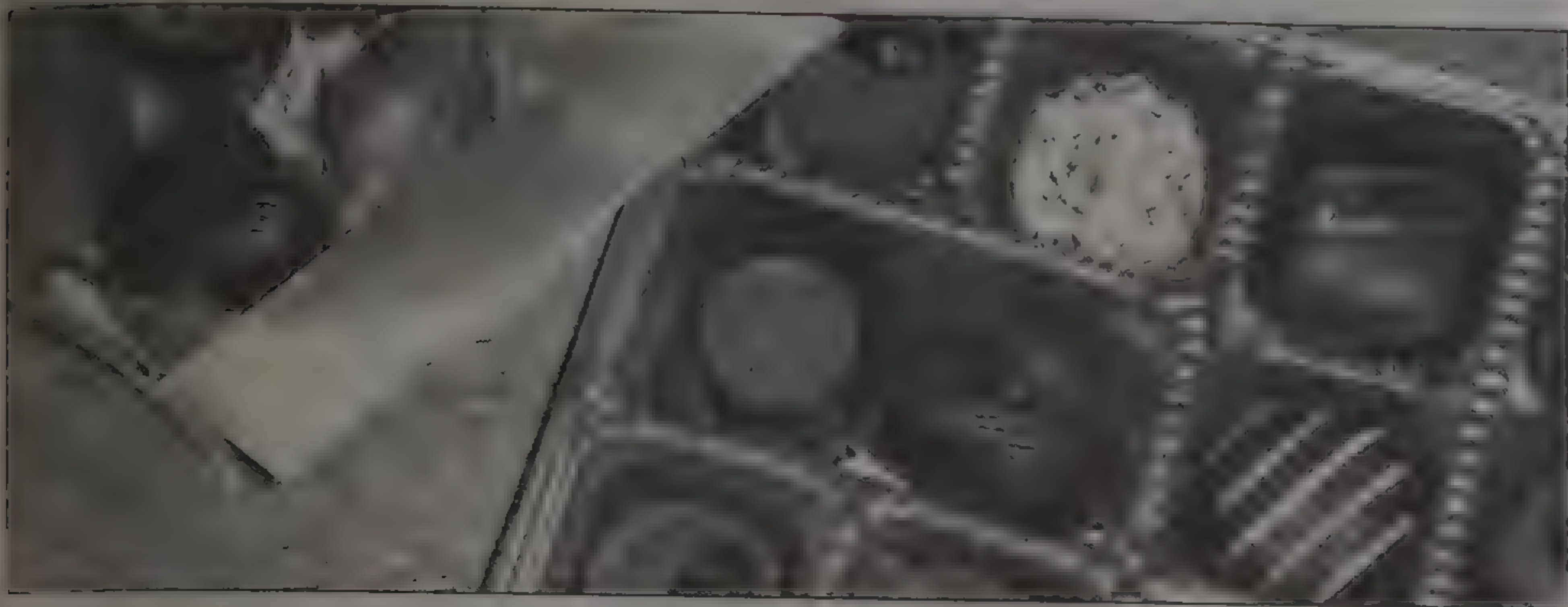


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True chocolate for your true love

JAN HOSTYN / jan@vancouverweekly.com

Don't do it. It may be easy, tempting and well-intentioned, but resist the urge. Grabbing the first box of chocolates you see as you race through the mall doesn't qualify as buying chocolate. It's more like buying a waxy, preservative-filled, cloyingly sweet impostor. If you are going to buy chocolate, buy real chocolate.

With Valentine's Day fast approaching, the obligatory chocolate is everywhere. And if you think giving chocolate is boring, passé or uninspired, you're wrong. Chocolate is luscious, sensual, decadent and sumptuous—but it has to be real chocolate. Real chocolate is worth hunting down, real chocolate is worth giving, but more importantly, real chocolate is definitely worth eating.

Granted, not all mass-produced chocolates are that bad. But they aren't that good either. And with incredible, delectable, fresh chocolates available at numerous locations in Edmonton, why would you consider anything else? They combine some of the best ingredients possible to create a dizzying array of options. With Madagascar vanilla, Belgian chocolate, Sicilian pistachios and Australian ginger, how could you go wrong?

Push open the door of a real chocolate shop and you'll be engulfed by the intense, rich, tantalizing aroma of chocolate. Let your eyes wander and revel in the sights: the elegance of the deep, dark chocolate, the exquisite milk chocolate delicacies, and the luxurious white chocolate creations. Pure, delicious, glorious chocolate. No preservatives, no wax, no cornstarch and no chemicals.

As if you needed any more convincing, it's worth pointing out that chocolate can actually be quite healthy. The trick, though, is that it has to be real and it has to be dark—but that's not asking very much for any chocolate lover.

BERNARD CALLEBAUT, one of my favourites, has three locations in Edmonton, so finding one shouldn't be

LOVE | CHOCOLATE

a problem. Choose a few of the exquisite specialty chocolates from the inviting display case or purchase a beautifully wrapped box, already carefully selected for you and begging to be unwrapped. For Valentine's Day the company has stunning chocolate hearts filled with assorted chocolates or, if you want something smaller, its individual milk or white chocolate hearts filled with vibrant berry purées would definitely make someone happy.

Some of Callebaut's best sellers include delicate Canadienne truffles made with rich maple syrup and white chocolate ganache, whimsical seashells with creamy hazelnut paste and silky smooth caramels. One of their creamy, rich moccachino chocolates—a luscious combination of coffee, hazelnut paste and white and dark chocolate all topped off with a vibrant coffee bean—can turn a bad day into an exceptionally good one.

Callebaut chocolates are \$11 per 100 grams, which means each truffle costs about \$1 to \$1.10. Once you experience the sensation of the rich chocolate melting seductively in your mouth, the flavour lingering enticingly afterwards, you'll agree that it's money well spent. Callebaut chocolates are made in Calgary and then shipped to Edmonton. The shops fill their boxes and replace the chocolates in the display case every two days—you can't get much fresher than that.

Carol's Quality Sweets claims to be the sweetest store in Edmonton, and it's hard to argue with that. Shelves loaded with nostalgic candy and huge jars of eye-catching licorice will transport you back to your childhood. When you walk in, the tantalizing aromas of sweet candy, creamy fudge and rich chocolate will all compete for your attention. Persevere and make your way to the counter where you will be rewarded with chocolates; lovely chocolates made right here in Edmonton with only the best ingredients.

Mounds of chocolate truffles will tempt you with flavours like caramel, champagne, strawberry and banana. White vanilla Belgian, milk maple Belgian and dark coffee Belgian are a few of the tempting creams. Carol's chocolates sell for \$9 for 100 grams, which works out to about \$1.35 per truffle. For Valentine's Day, try some of the wickedly delicious chocolate-dipped strawberries. The price depends on the cost of the strawberries at the time, but usually runs about \$3.50 for two or three big, succulent berries.

KERSTIN'S CHOCOLATES are Edmonton-based as well. Its Chocophilia gourmet chocolates are small bars with a bit of a twist. I was lucky enough to enjoy a sample at the Italian Centre one day and can see how the Chocophilia Pumpkin Pie—a milk chocolate bar covered with graham cracker bits and flavoured with nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon—can become habit-forming. Other intriguing varieties are available, and they have a special Valentine's Day offering: the Valentine's Chocolate Collection contains two bars from the Chocophilia line, chocolate caviar and gourmet chocolate fondue for two for \$25.95.

Purdy's chocolates, although more mass-produced than the others, are still quite good. Made in Vancouver and then shipped to Edmonton, they stay on the shelves for no more than three weeks. There is an extensive assortment of Valentine's Day specialties including peanut butter hearts (kind of like really good peanut butter cups), milk chocolate lipsticks (chocolate lips on a stick) and dark chocolate mint hearts. If you want a bit of variety you can always get an assortment of luscious creams and truffles in a heart-shaped box. The prices vary, but truffles cost \$1.15 each and the creams, caramels and smoothies are \$5.05 per hundred grams.

Don't be fooled by all the chocolate impostors taking over the shelves this February. Delicious, healthy, real chocolate is readily available and unbelievably delicious. Make someone happy, even if it's just yourself. ▽



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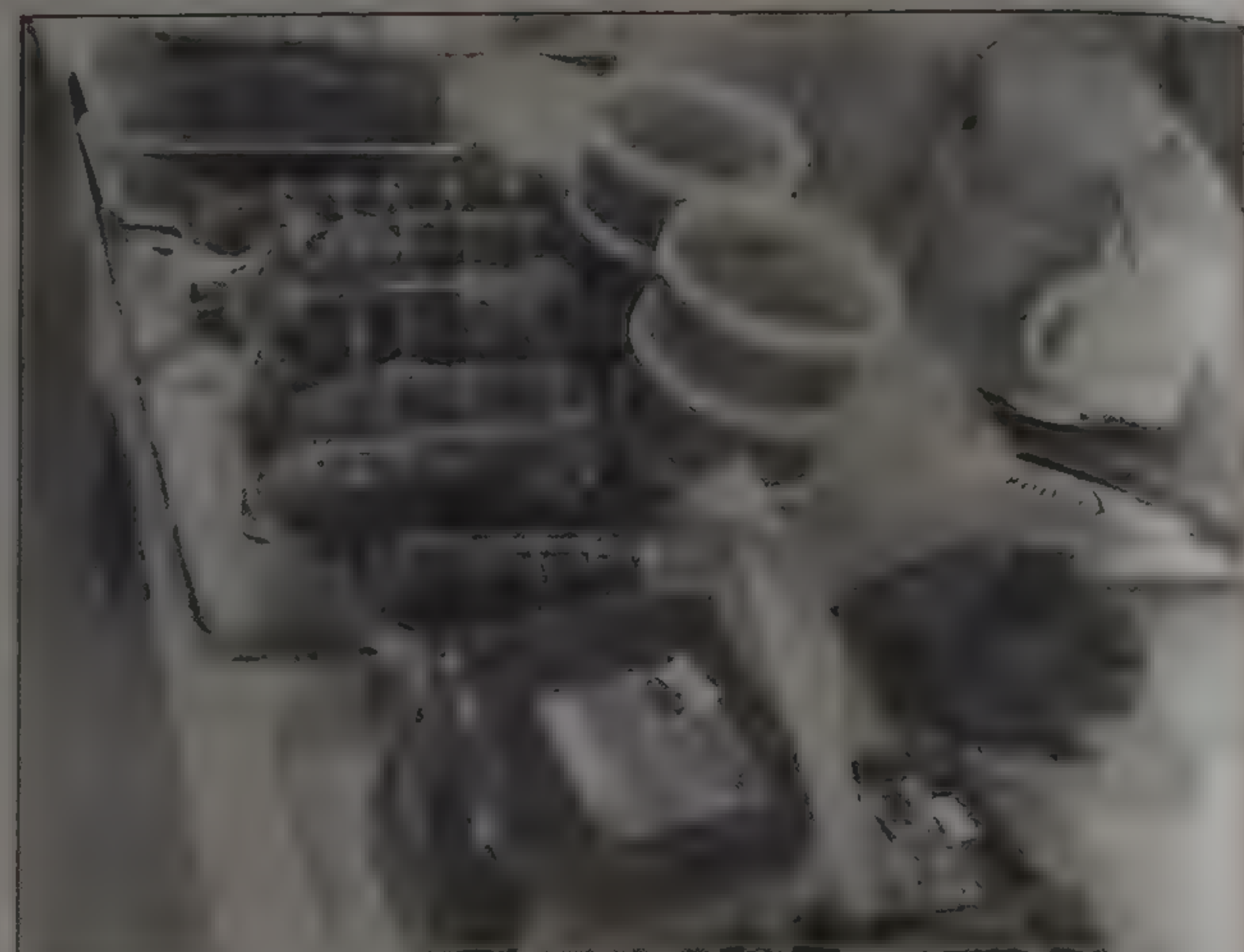
SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vancouverweekly.com

Two years ago, my partner and I were on a cycling trip through Southeast Asia, which included almost two months spent pedalling through the lush Mekong Delta and up the long coastline of southern Vietnam. Both vegetarians, we quickly learned one hard and fast rule when, tired and famished, we rode into some little Vietnamese town well off the beaten tourist track: get thee to a monastery.

While it may surprise Edmontonians used to local Vietnamese restaurants that focus almost exclusively on meat and fish dishes and offer few or no vegetarian options, Vietnam offers a plethora of vegetarian food, owing largely to the fact that Buddhist monks and many lay practitioners of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition—the main religion in Vietnam—are predominantly vegetarian. As a result, most Buddhist temples have a fully vegetarian restaurant (indicated by the Vietnamese word *chay*) either attached to the temple or very close by, offering not only a range of cheap and delicious meatless dishes, but also ones prepared with tofu or gluten-based faux meats.

On our return to Edmonton we kept our eyes peeled for the magical word *chay* when we passed the multitude of Vietnamese restaurants in the city, but always came away disappointed. That was until we discovered the **Truc Lam Monastery**, and were reminded of that most important of rules we had learned on the road.

EVERY SUNDAY MORNING, a group of some 20 volunteers prepares an overwhelming feast of homemade vegetarian dishes for the community and those attending the Dharma service



Vietnamese

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upstairs, with all proceeds going to support the temple's operations.

We arrived one Sunday morning and excitedly made our way down the narrow, shoe-strewn staircase to the basement, the sounds of the service upstairs mixing with the multitude of voices, and the smell of delicious food, coming from the basement. After taking off our shoes, we entered the long room, the walls adorned with Buddha statues and images, filled with tables of Vietnamese families sitting and talking while their children ran about. Our eyes quickly came to the long table stretched out along the south wall,

filled with a seemingly endless array of dishes to choose from.

We received friendly greetings from the volunteers taking money and hastily packing bulging bags for customers as we surveyed the various options of soup, a mountain of salad rolls and an incredible assortment of tofu and vegetable dishes before making our way to the end of the table and taking in the range of desserts and frozen faux-meat options. The only downside was that, because the food is predominantly for take-out, it comes heavily packaged in Styrofoam (although they happily used the bags we had brought with us and one volunteer indicated that they are willing to fill reusable containers instead).

OVERWHELMED WITH choice and wanting to sample a range of options we were assisted by some friendly volunteers who indicated what was in

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sh dish and made recommenda-
for combinations we might try.
First up was the choice of soup.
While we were tempted by the *can*
ua (hot and sour soup), filled with
celery, pineapple, taro root,
tomato and tofu (\$5 for one litre), we
decided on the *bun rieu* (shrimp
noodle soup), which comes with a bag
of thin rice noodles, sprouts, lettuce,
basil and faux ham (\$7 for one litre).

Choosing from a range of faux-fish
options, made from tofu and bean
curd and wrapped in seaweed, was
next, ranging from fish fillets (\$5) to
an attractively orange faux-lobster
made from tofu and bean curd (\$5).
Our protein taken care of, we passed
on a number of mouth-watering tofu
dishes. We did, however, make sure
to grab some salad rolls (\$2 for 4)
which come with hoisin sauce.

We were also talked quite easily into
taking home a range of sticky rice dis-
hes, the first of which was flavoured with
coconut and black peas and came with a
bag of crushed sesame seeds to sprinkle
on top (\$2) and *bahn chung*, a sticky rice
cake square with mung beans and faux
pork wrapped in a bamboo leaf (\$7.50).

For dessert, we gorged on the rac-
quetball-sized sesame balls (\$2 for 3),
which, because they were served to us
warm, we had to try on the spot. We bit
into the sweet, warm exterior of rice
flour and sesame seeds and came to the
mung bean filling, which filled our
mouths with a delicious hint of coconut.

After paying a total of \$29.50, we
hurried home with two bulging bags
of food and hastily unpacked and
began to prepare our meal.

WE POURED THE *bun rieu* into a pot to
warm it, breaking up the huge piece of
seasoned tofu as we stirred it into the
rich stock along with the smaller faux
shrimp, cherry tomatoes and mush-
rooms. While we were waiting, we
dove into the salad rolls, which didn't
last long. A light mix of grated carrot,
lettuce, glass noodles, mushroom and
tofu, the rolls and the rich dipping sauce
were a perfect way to start the meal.

Checking on the *bun rieu*, we added
the contents of the bag that comes
with the soup—which includes a

healthy serving of noodles, faux-ham,
bean sprouts, lettuce and basil—
before turning off the stove to let the
flavours mingle.

The *bun rieu* tasted as good as it
smelled, the rich flavours giving just a
hint of seafood and the variety of tofu
and faux-meats making each bite dif-
ferent as we hungrily pulled the noo-
dles and tofu from the broth with
chopsticks, the flavour occasionally
accented with hints of basil. At the
same time, we pulled pieces of the
faux-lobster with our chopsticks to
supplement the soup. While it certain-
ly wouldn't fool an omnivore, the
meaty texture of the lobster provided a
distinctly salty taste of seafood that
went well with the *bun rieu*.

Finishing off the soup, we took a
break and surveyed the food still laid
out on the table before us, realizing
we had likely bitten off more than we
could chew, but sorely tempted to
sample all the dishes.

After unwrapping the giant bamboo
leaf of the *bahn chung* to expose a
greenish square of sticky rice, we
sliced into the moist cake, exposing
the ample bean curd and faux-pork
inside. After a few mouthfuls, we
were becoming strained. The bamboo
leaf added a rich, earthy flavour to the
sticky rice, but in combination with
the filling—especially the pork, which
had the most realistic taste and tex-
ture of the faux meats—it made for an
incredibly dense and filling dish.

The coconut sticky rice, which
straddles the line between a main
dish and a dessert, was the perfect
end to the meal, providing an almost-
dessert. We sprinkled the crushed
sesame seeds over the rice and pulled
off pieces. The sweetness of the
coconut was dominant, but the black
beans provided a interesting balance.

Unfortunately, after a couple of
mouthfuls, we couldn't take anymore.
We slumped back in our chairs, stom-
achs aching, to rest before wrapping
up the abundant leftovers, which
could easily provide another filling
meal, to enjoy later.

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Pot stickers ring in the year of the rat

FOOD **AT HOME**
JAN HOSTYN
jan@vuwweekly.com

I can't even begin to count the number of times I've eaten Chinese food. My parents introduced me to it early in life, and I've been consuming it on a regular basis ever since. I can, however, count the number of times I've actually made Chinese food—that one's small enough that I doubt I'd even need one hand.

Chinese New Year begins on Feb 7 this year, and I thought I would celebrate by actually cooking a Chinese dish. I did a bit of research and found that jiaozi, or pot stickers, are a traditional part of the celebration that symbolize wealth and prosperity—not a bad thing to symbolize, I figured.

I found a number of recipes, all fairly similar, and decided on one that uses store-bought wonton wrappers. I know, that's a little like cheating, but the thought of making the dough and rolling it out was a bit too adventurous. If my first attempt was successful, maybe I'd attempt the dough next time. I had to make a quick stop at Save-On Foods to pick up some of the ingredients and was thrilled to find dumpling wrappers, not just egg roll wrappers. Buoyed on by my success, I rushed home and got to work.

The recipe itself wasn't very complicated. You mix all the ingredients together and then stuff the jiaozi. It sounded like something even I could do.

I put a few leaves of Napa cabbage in the microwave for a minute to soften them, and then chopped them up finely along with the carrots and green onions. That went into a big bowl along with the ground pork, soy sauce (I used the reduced sodium version), sesame oil and egg. I crushed the garlic and grated the ginger (it was easier than mincing it), added both to the bowl and smushed it all up. It's supposed to be easier to handle the filling if you refrigerate it for a bit first, so I threw it into the fridge for about an hour before tackling the next step.

ONCE THE FILLING was properly cooled—and I was mentally prepared—I lined a couple of pans with parchment paper, opened the dumpling package and laid out a bunch of wrappers. I put on my sanitary gloves (I have a thing about handling raw meat), grabbed my teaspoon and put a mound of filling on each wrapper. Then I moistened the edge of the first one with water, folded it over and tried to seal it. I

had stuffed it too much—a habit I have from making perogies—and the filling started to leak out. Frustrated, I removed some filling from each dumpling and tried again. They actually sealed this time.

I managed to fill about a dozen before realizing I had a ton of filling left and only a smallish frying pan to fry/steam them in. Not wanting the process to take all night (and feeling a bit lazy), I decided to make meatballs out of the rest of the filling. In no time at all I had two pans of meatballs, cooked, cooling and almost ready to be put into the freezer. They would make a great quick dinner, tossed with noodles and maybe a bit of teriyaki sauce.

Back to the dumplings. I heated up my frying pan and added a drizzle of vegetable oil and a few drops of sesame oil. I carefully laid out the jiaozi, browned them for about two minutes and then added 1/2 cup of water so they could steam. Mixing water and hot oil is usually explosive and this was no exception. A bit of a mess ensued before I could plop the lid on.

It takes about 10 minutes to properly steam the dumplings, and I ended up adding another cup of water when the pan got too dry. Too much, I think—the browned part of the dumpling wasn't as crispy as it should have been. Oh well.

A drizzle of soy sauce and a bit of chili paste and they were ready to eat. They were actually good—not restaurant quality, but pretty good for a first attempt.

I would make these again, but still wouldn't make the dough. First I need to be more accomplished at filling and cooking them. It does make trying other ethnic recipes a little less intimidating, though. Not that I'll make that my Chinese New Year's resolution—I'm awful with resolutions and would be doomed for failure. Here's hoping prosperity and wealth find me this year regardless. ▽

JIAOZI (POT STICKERS)
(FROM VISUALRECIPES.COM)

- 1/2 kilo (1.1 lbs) ground pork
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1 cup chopped napa cabbage (blanched)
- 1/2 cup carrots finely minced or grated
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp minced ginger
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 egg
- salt and pepper to taste
- egg roll wrappers

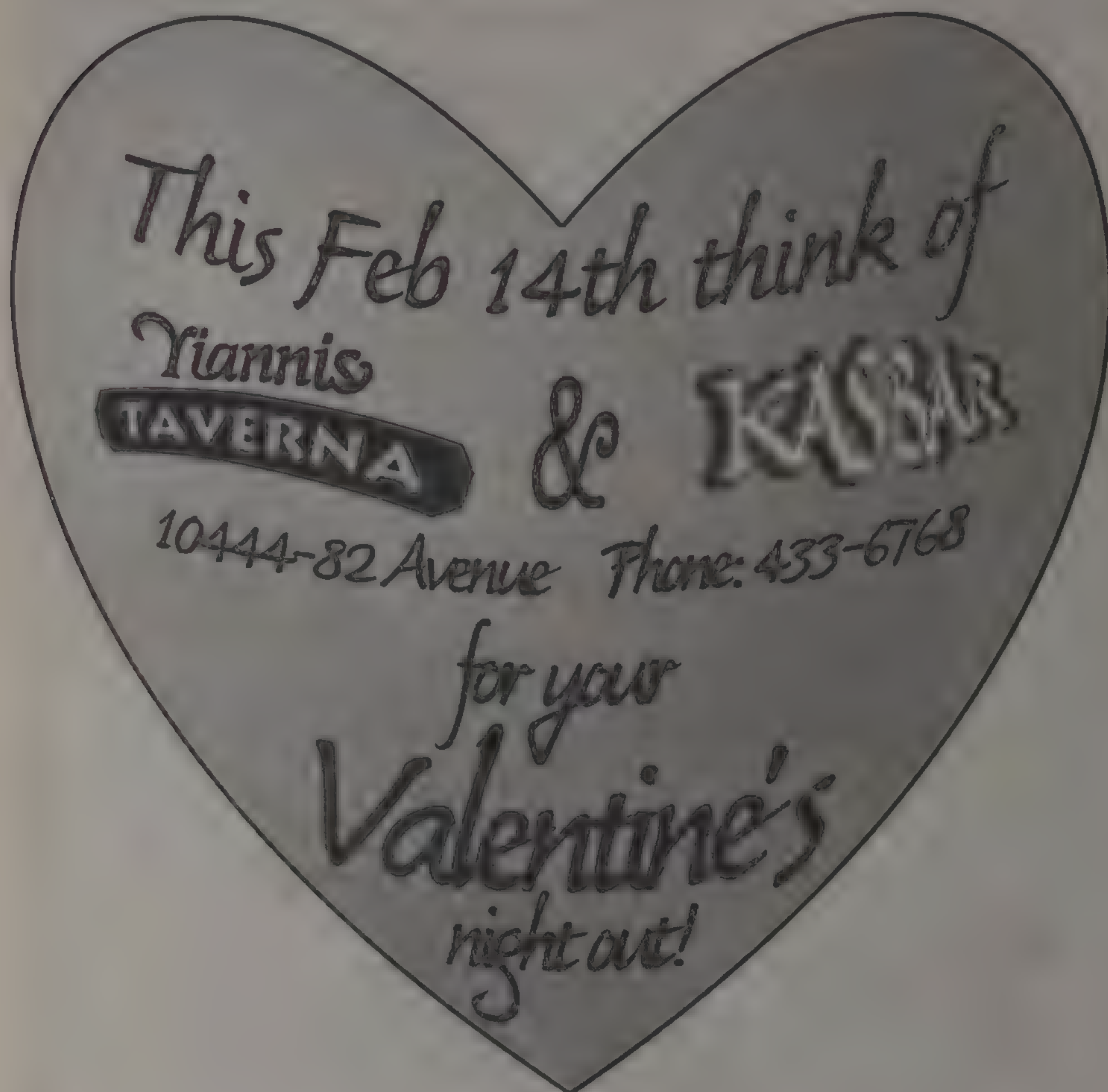


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Generally not images you want to evoke when trying to persuade someone to pick your beer up from the liquor store shelf. But somehow the lads that brought you the Ministry of Silly Walks, the Dead Parrot and a hugely original version of Camelot now bring you a British session beer.

Okay, not really. The beer comes from English microbrewer Black Sheep Brewery, who have made decent ales since the early 1990s. But there really is a touch of the craziness of the six Monty Python comic books that made up Monty Python's Flying Circus and/or the group's selection of feature films, such as *Life of Brian*, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *The Meaning of Life*. The group's rather surreal, absurdist and of humour is unforgettable. (For those of you who grew up under a rock, get thee to a video store and rent

a few DVDs and you will quickly understand what I mean.)

BUT, TO THE BEER. Black Sheep launched Monty Python Holy Grail (with the 'gr' crossed out to highlight the AIL) in 1999 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Pythons. It proudly proclaims that it is "tempered over burning witches"—kind of beats "beechwood aged" to bits, doesn't it? It's designed as an English Bitter, a mild ale that is meant to offer flavour to an evening of quaffing pints. Holy Grail pours a deep, rounded gold with a thin white head that disappears quickly, leaving only a few traces on the side of the glass. It has a rather fruity aroma with hints of toffee in the background. There is also some yeastiness in the smell, which reminds me of a mediocre homebrew kit.

In the taste, there is distinct fruit up front—pear, some berry and a hint of grapefruit. The malt is subdued, offering some toffee and caramel, but both are understated. The body is fairly lifeless and thinner than this style should be. A yeasty bite detracts as well. The hop finish is rounded and moderate. After the swallow, some bitterness lingers, which I find to be the best quality of the beer.

Overall I find the beer interesting but unimpressive: it's a bit flat and lifeless. The fruity esters are overdone and it needs both more malt character and a touch more bitterness. Unfortunately, it's not the kind of beer one expects when it hitches itself to the almost out-of-control Pythons. A more "out there" beer would have better honoured their memory. I guess next time I'll go rent *Life of Brian* to satisfy those Python-cravings. ▼

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Backstage, unheardof's consumable stars get an earful

CHRISTOPHER THRALL / christopher@vuwweekly.com

People! People! Your attention, please? Could everyone just take a seat on the floor? We have something important to discuss ... Ginger vinaigrette, could I have your attention for a minute? I don't care if the pistachio goat round cheese was telling a story—could I get you to focus for a minute on dinner?

All right—we have work to do. I want this to be the best damned show

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possible, and I will work with you until we succeed. Candied yams, if I have to ask for silence one more time ... thank you.

Now, we all know that Tuesday night's performance was below expectations. I know it was a slow night, with only about five tables seated in our little restaurant, but that doesn't mean you can deliver anything less than 100 per cent. After all we've been doing this for 28 years, so we've been "heard of" by now. Our five-course table d'hôte runs \$75 each, so the audience expects something really special when they come

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take in the five-act plays at unheardof. Even the à la carte entrée monologues, at upwards of \$34, could be at their absolute best. That said, there were also some terrific performances. Ballentine Block Zinfandel, you came out of nowhere and thrilled the audience. pulled duck salad, I was very happy with your work as well. However, one of you didn't deliver your best and we need to find out where the problems are. I took some notes and we can run through some of the scenes together.

FIRST OF ALL, THE SETTING: the designers did a terrific job of creating an "old-timey Alberta" feel out of knickknacks, artwork and slatted wood across the walls and ceiling that couldn't look out of place in a sauna. The tables were well dressed in white linen and stylish silverware, so I had no problem there. As for the menu, I simply LOVE the fact that we deliver the script to every member of the audience: it's so much fun to watch them struggle with the luscious descriptions of the performance they are about to savour!

This Tuesday night's audience, as you remember quite well, went for the table d'hôte five-act. Out of the extensive beverage list, they decided to start with a couple of glasses of the Zinfandel (\$13) and were very glad that they did. You turned in a bright, boisterous performance that settled down over the course of the meal, Ballentine. What they loved most about you, they told me later, was the flavour of flowers rather than fruit in your delivery. They also enjoyed the way you dried out on the sides of their palates. Great job, B.

I thought that the first act started strong, with the portabella risotto and that great Cheese Please platter. It took a while for her to warm up to the portabella's deep, earthy performance. She wasn't entirely satisfied, but I can't blame either the cambazola or padano cheeses. He enjoyed most of the platter, even though the Danish blue port was a little flat. Both the svelte Padano and the pear butter under brie and the pistachio goat round's lightly-flavoured creaminess earned significant applause. When the diced beets hiding under the goat round ad libbed those delicious lines, I howled with delight!

THAT FIRST SCENE CHANGE took a bit longer than it should have, but the next act was well-received. I noticed that the presentation was a little more generous than they expected, but they all dove in with pleasure. Bocconcini and pear salad, I'm going to have to ask you to come a little less dressed next time. I'm afraid that your costume overwhelmed your performance. However, pulled duck salad, you delivered an outstanding production. The discrete, dark duck and chunks kept surprising him. The shoestring potatoes you wore lent just the right crunchy texture, and your supporting cast of ginger vinaigrette and crumbled feta combined sweet and salty to perfection. Keep it up. Now, I've heard some complaining about how I lavish attention on the "stars" to the detriment of anyone else's efforts. Tonight, a pair of parts absolutely stole the show.

When the curtain raised on the third act and our two tiny scarlet sorbets made their appearance, I was awestruck. The blend of strawberry, cranberry and white wine held just the right balance of tart and sweet. Rinds and seeds gave testament to your authenticity. It was a bravura performance and I savoured every scrape of the audience's spoons on their sorbet cups. You truly left them wanting more of those summer berry flavours on their tongues.

ENTRÉES—your performances were uneven.

Caribou tenderloin, you delivered a singular performance of luscious dark meat, but your texture was far finer than the audience expected. By comparing you to a truly delicious liver, he wanted something denser than you gave them. Good job, steamed vegetables, but candied yams: you were overdone.

Bison tenderloin, I was happier with your efforts. Your sage and whisky marinade combined perfectly with the mandarin merlot sauce you wore: the audience was impressed. Shoestring potatoes' second appearance was welcome onstage, but gravy really distracted from the overall performance. Did you have to be so overpowering, gravy? Yours is an important supporting role, but you tried to horn in on every exchange and left the rest a little sour. Bison, please rehearse a bit with gravy before our next big night.

After the entrées' climactic appearance, the pace slowed down quite a bit, as it always does. Don't misinterpret my critique: the audience was satisfied and looking forward to the final act. Cheesecake and Turtle Tart, you waited just long enough to heighten tension without letting them realize that the two-hour mark had passed. After you arrived onstage, the audience thought of nothing else.

Cardamon vanilla cheesecake, you dazzled. That almond crust with an insanely tart pomegranate sauce ensemble is terrific—don't change. You were dense, sweet and imbued with the flavour of cardamom that energized each bite. Turtle Tart, you just about lost it on that dry, uninspired first line. However, you soon revealed your caramel layer between the crumbled pecans in your phyllo dish and the mound of whipped cream under chocolate sauce and more caramel. Both of you left the audience stuffed with sensation and silently applauding.

Overall, the performance was a solid evening of fine culinary art. We know what we're doing. I'm just not sure that the audience felt that they enjoyed over \$200 worth of entertainment. I'll read a couple of comment cards, then we'll run a couple of scenes. Portabella risotto, Cheese Please—you're up first.

Knowledgeable staff, good food. I can see why unheardof has been talked about for almost 30 years! —Christopher's wife

I might try different dishes next time, or a busier night to get the true vibe of the place. The crème brûlée is a different performance every time, I hear: I will be back. —Christopher Thrall

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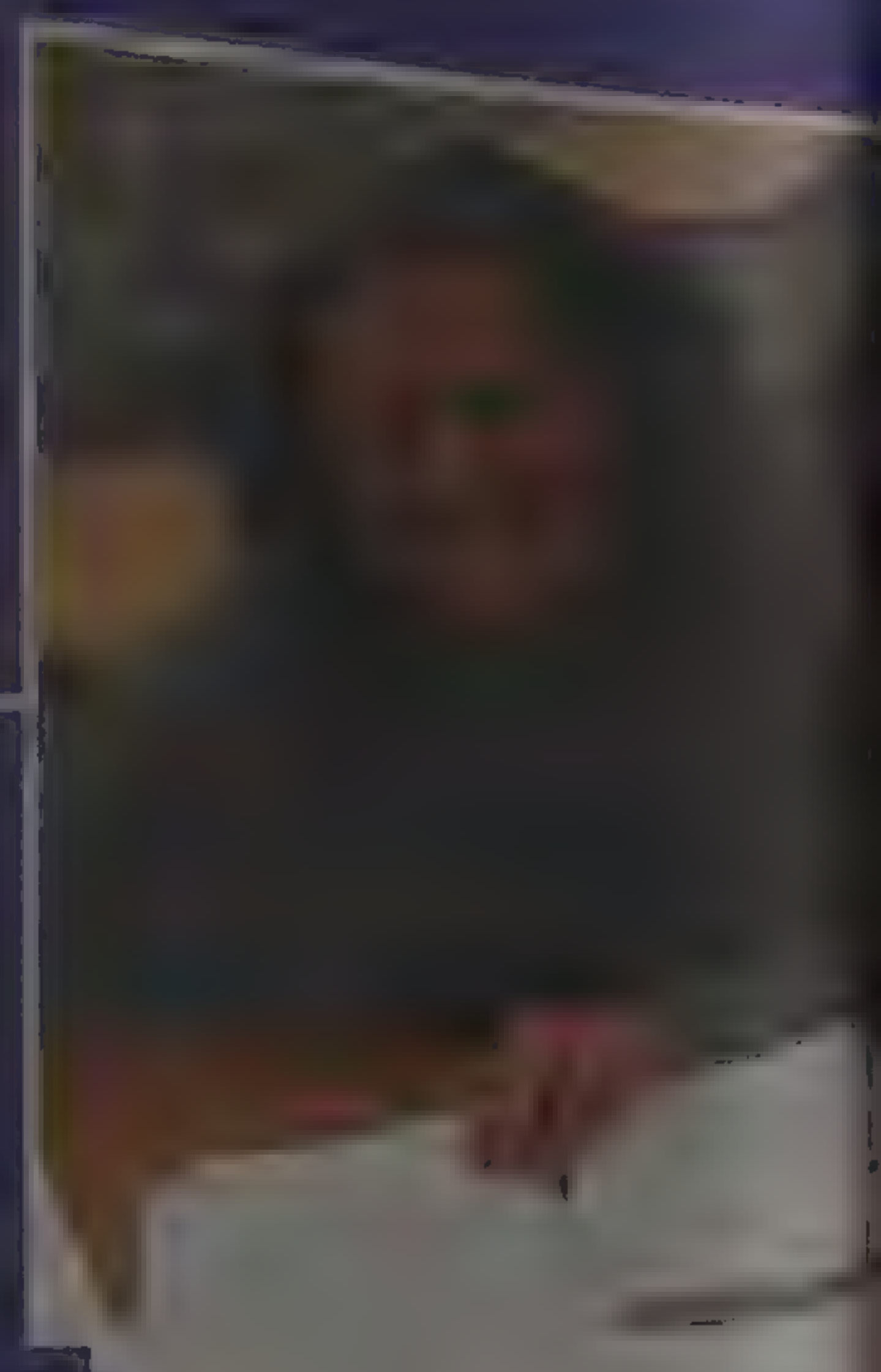
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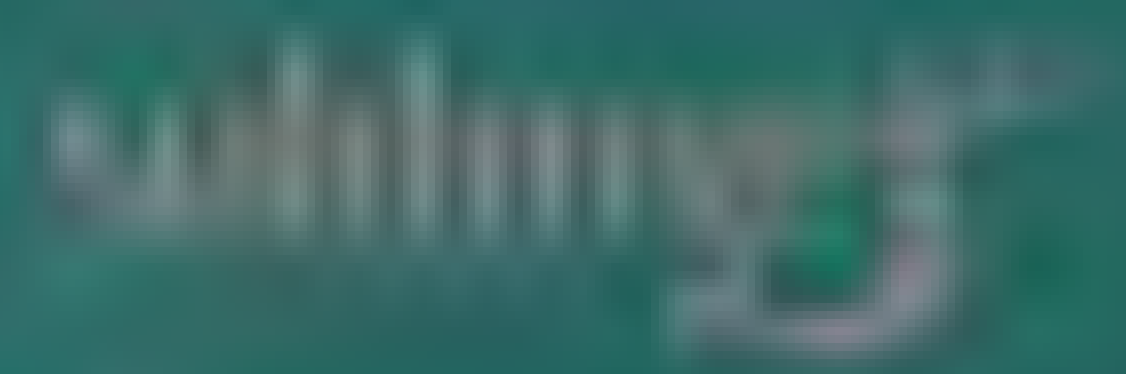
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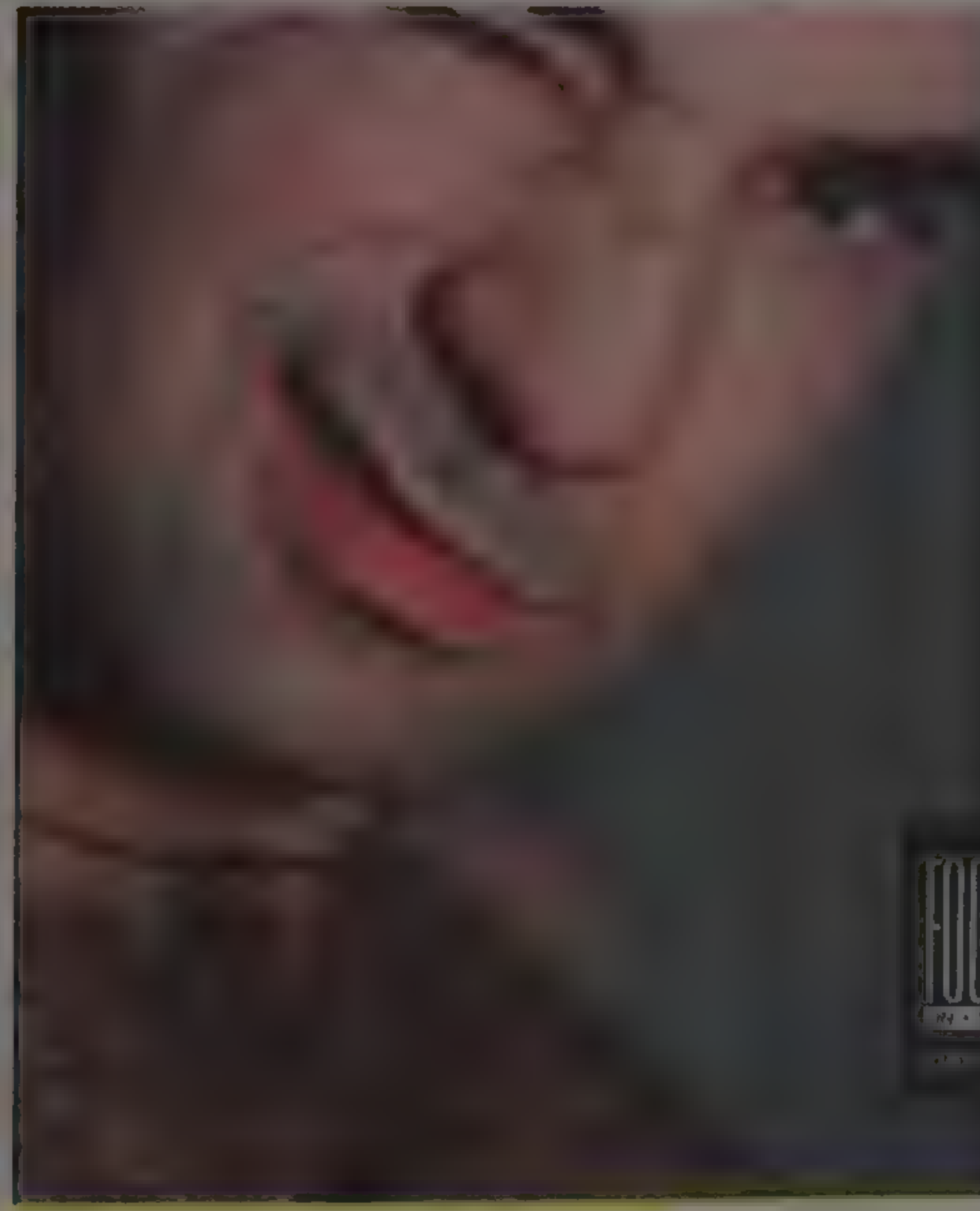
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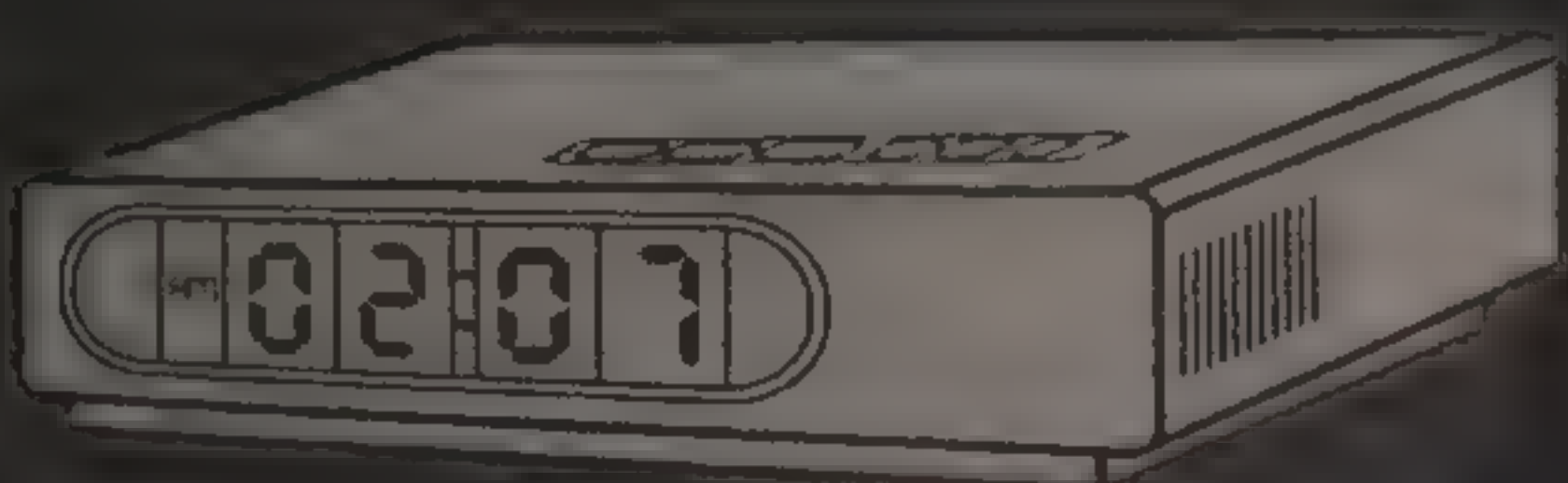
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Historic burial ground deserves a more fitting tribute

DESECRATED FOR 50 YEARS, SACRED LAND DEMANDS A MONUMENT WORTHY OF ITS PAST AND FUTURE

AGNIESZKA MATEJKO / agnieszka@vancouverweekly.com

Most Edmontonians don't know that for more than 50 years we've been desecrating a cemetery almost daily. To make matters worse, it was one of the most important, historic cemeteries in our city, a place where not only our city's founders but also many residents' own ancestors are buried: the traditional aboriginal burial ground and the Fort Edmonton Cemetery, located near the north end of the Walterdale Bridge.

The most bizarre part of this situation is that the cemetery isn't some secret hideaway recently discovered by archeologists. Up to the great flood of the Saskatchewan River in 1915 it was fenced off and many graves were marked: the flood washed away the more obvious markers, and in the 1950s construction on a traffic circle—and later, Rosedale Road, which still covers a portion of the site—literally scattered bones all over the place. (These bones were mercifully collected and stored in the University of Alberta until eventually being returned to the site)

It's not as if people weren't upset about it, either. Many of the descendants of the people buried in the Fort Edmonton cemetery still live here. Moreover, the areas of Rosedale and the site of the Epcor Plant are traditional burial grounds where dozens and possibly hundreds of aboriginal people still lie buried. As you can imagine, aboriginal groups were not exactly happy to have sewers and a tangled spaghetti load of wires going through their ancestral burial ground.

Those groups, among others, have been justifiably protesting the desecration for years. Until recently, a circle of white crosses marked the sacred site. The crosses were simple planks of wood hammered together and stuck in the ground; despite their oddly out-of-place look, though, the city had the wisdom to let them be.

THOSE CROSSES REMAINED until our municipal government decided to do something about it. Four years ago the various stakeholders—including representatives from numerous Native bands, Catholic groups, Epcor executives and many others—were invited to participate in large public meetings to discuss the future of the site, and an historic consultant was hired. Two architects, Shafraaz Kaba and Myron Nebozuk of Manasc Isaac Architects Ltd, were offered the monumental task of working with all of these groups to construct a commemorative site.



Tim Atherton

VIZ ARTS
TRADITIONAL BURIAL GROUND AND FORT EDMONTON CEMETERY
 DESIGNED BY SHAFRAAZ KABA, MYRON NEBOZUK
 (MANASC ISAAC ARCHITECTS)

orative site. Finally the shortcut running over known graves was eliminated, Epcor agreed to move a part of the western fence and work could begin; the memorial was finally completed last summer.

I met Kaba at the monument, where he explained the complex symbolism of the design. It was a chilly winter day and we were the lone pedestrians in the river valley. Wrapped in a blanket to keep warm, the deep, untouched snow added to the feeling of being an early explorer entering sacred ground.

The area seemed much larger than it had from the window of a car whizzing past: it stretches from the road right to the river, an historic point in its own right—this was the site of early river crossings, including the Walterdale ferry, and, fittingly enough, where Kaba began our tour. The view of the city disappeared, the river valley

rose above us precipitously while the river became small and friendly. Kaba's voice was filled with passion for this secluded place; he explained that he had hoped to build a lookout right in that spot, but sadly, for now at least, there's no money left to build.

As we turned back north and headed towards the cemetery, Kaba showed me the series of historic panels, then a spot for a native flower garden, hidden under the snow. The garden borders a path that draws an infinity sign in the ground, and around the path rises a circle of lights, echoing teepee poles, as well as spears of the Blackfoot that marked territory. Hovering above the entire ground is a steel monument with a cross and a circle, suggesting both a Christian symbol and a sign of Native spirituality, depending on your viewpoint. The wide steel circle is incomplete; the break represents the fact that the area has not been fully reconciled. As Kaba pointed out as we made our way back to our cars, many graves still lie undiscovered.

WITH THE FOUR YEARS of contributions by community groups, the city

of Edmonton and devoted and talented architects, I wish I could say that the monument that stands in the heart of our city is a crowning success. I can't.

There are certainly beautiful and profoundly meaningful symbols here, and there is a deep sense of being on sacred ground once inside the site—the space was thought through and visibly loved by all who worked on it. But, from the view of cars, this monument largely disappears into an industrial mesh of lines.

The graceful "teepee" lights are dwarfed by a much more massive row of street lights, the effect rendering them almost spindly. The central monument, which can be beautiful against a sky, is too often viewed against gigantic Epcor chimneys, particularly from the road, and the steel fence of Epcor forms a bleak backdrop. The commemorative cement blocks, originally designed to be a sinuous line flowing like the landscape, ended up disjointed and looking a bit under construction.

There are numerous reasons why this project may not have worked out. It could be due to the lack of

funding, which did affect Kaba's plans for the cement blocks: though roughly \$1 million was spent, the nature of the project made it highly complex, and it covers a large area, as well. Perhaps there were too many people contributing to the design, or maybe it's the simple fact that the site is visually too busy, and any monument may have struggled in the space.

Regardless, Edmontonians should not just shrug our shoulders and accept a good try. This is the core of our city, the center between downtown and Strathcona. It's the spot every visitor passes on the way to downtown, the most visible historic location. It is the spiritual heart of Edmonton where our Aboriginal, fur trader and pioneer founders lie buried together.

Let's allow the funds for Kaba to build the lookout; landscape the Epcor fence with native bushes, move the street lights to give the monument visual presence. Finally, let's take out the blocks and do the sinuous line that the architects originally intended. Maybe once we take care of the heart, the visual design of the rest of the city will follow. ♥

There's *Something* about Mump and Smoot

PAUL BLINOV / blinov@vuweekly.com

Like the way I eat my yogurt?" Michael Kennard jokingly prods during our lunchtime interview, consuming the tiny serving of dairy without use of a spoon. It's a curious way for a grown man to eat lunch, and in a way, it's telling—he happens to be one of Canada's most revered clowns.

Although Kennard's currently teaching in the U of A's drama department, he's soon to revisit his fringe-trotting glory days with cohort John Turner. The pair—who, as clowns Mump and Smoot, live on planet Umno, bow to the god Umno and speak Umnoian—are taking to the stage for the first time in six years to present their first-ever fringe hit, *Something*, to a new generation of audiences.

"At the beginning of that six-year [gap] we'd been touring a lot, and we needed a break from touring, from the characters and from each other; we both had other things we wanted to do," Kennard explains. "So [we said], 'Let's just stop doing it for a while, and when we start getting the urge again, we'll do it [again].'"

"Over those six years we still worked together on different projects," he adds. "So the company never disappeared, Mump and Smoot just took a nap."

PREVIEW

THU, FEB 7 - SUN, FEB 17 (8 PM)

MUMP AND SMOOT IN SOMETHING

DIRECTED BY KAREN HINES

STARRING MICHAEL KENNARD, JOHN TURNER,

CHRISTEL BARTELSE

TRANS ALTA ARTS BARN (10330 - 84 AVENUE),

\$15 - \$23 (AGES 18+)

MUMP AND SMOOT'S bumbling beginnings stretch back a full two decades, when Kennard and Turner together took a clowning class taught by renowned clown trainer Richard Pochinko. Upon his urgings, they cobbled together a 20-minute show called *Jump the Gun*, the first step in a career that not only includes seven full-length shows but has seen them perform internationally to wild acclaim, teach all over the country and gather a tidy pile of awards for their efforts. But writing the material for two "horror clowns" hasn't gotten easier with age; it's just gotten more engrossing, with work beginning on shows years before any audience gets a peek.

"It's a long process; if you were to look at the placement of the shows, the first couple came close together, but then you'd see that there's two or three years between each [later] show," Kennard says, uncoiling the



plastic wrap around his sandwich and sizing it up while he finishes his answer. "When we were doing the Fringes way back, we never felt that we had a new show until we'd done at least 50 or 100 [performances]. Then you've made all the discoveries, and you've done all the tweaking."

Kennard and Turner were asked specifically by the Fringe to bring back their original show, and for them, it

was about time to resurrect their clownish duo—"John and I had just started talking about creating a new show, so we thought we'd use this as a springboard," he admits—and despite the lengthy time since they last performed *Something* Kennard seems unconcerned about dusting off his old material. After embodying Mump for so many shows, little, if anything, could phase him

"[Redoing *Something*] should be... won't say easy—we've had to do all the producing, and revamping material and stuff—but if we're trusting [the characters] will just come back easily," he says. "I mean, we've done that show over 500 times, so we know what it's about. It'll probably be on the fourth night in the run and something will happen and we'll go, 'Ah, that's what we did there.'" ▼

There's a lot to deal with *While We're Young*

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Though Don Hannah had no shortage of reasons to spend his last two years as playwright-in-residence at the U of A, he freely admits that, when he first applied for the job a few years ago, one aspect trumped all the others: the commission.

"I think everybody was excited at the prospects of having a residence position that was specifically for playwrights," Hannah explains, the energy in his voice palpable. "Because really, there's pretty much no better job than being paid just to write a play, which is something that can be pretty rare in Canada."

While Hannah did spend his residency doing more than just writing—he cites closer ties to Edmonton's bustling theatre scene and the chance to mentor younger writers as two of the non-writing highlights—there's no denying that the world premiere of *While We're Young* marks the culmination of his time at the U of A, both literally and figuratively. Written specifically for the graduating BFA class—the first time ever such a thing has happened—the play follows six distinct but related young couples throughout history, from present-day Edmonton to Confederation Nova Scotia, as each has to make a crucial decision in their life.

As Hannah explains, after spending countless hours getting to know the

PREVIEW

THU, FEB 7 - SAT, FEB 16 (7:30 PM)

WHILE WE'RE YOUNG

DIRECTED BY KIM MCCAW

WRITTEN BY DON HANNAH

STARRING THE U OF A BFA ACTING CLASS OF 2008

TIMMS CENTRE (112 ST & 87 AVE); \$10 - \$20

young actors he was writing for—he even had them do some writing for him, to get a better idea of their cares and concerns—he was forced to examine what it meant to be young in the world. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he found that, regardless of era, the worries and problems and hopes and fears tend to be fairly similar.

"Certainly part of it just came from me listening to them and relating it to my own experience," relates Hannah, who admits he's comfortably into his own middle age at this point. "There are certain things that are just kind of universal about being that age: you're trying to shake off the remnants of childhood while you're still not sure of exactly how to become an adult, and for the first time you're really faced with some big decisions about what kind of person you're going to be."

THAT BEING Hannah's mindset, it should come as no surprise that another of the major themes of the play is the effect the choices we make—even when we're young—can have. As he points out, one of youth's most understandable but most tragic

follies can be overlooking the profound and far-reaching effects that even the simplest decisions can have.

"When we're young we tend to look toward the future at the expense of the past, which makes sense because we don't have a lot of past to look at," he says. "But because of that, sometimes we can forget to consider how the choices

we're making now are going to affect us down the line. To some extent you do that your entire life, but as you age, I think you become more acutely aware of how the past affects you."

Though there's unquestionably wisdom in Hannah's words, they do bring up a potential issue: Hannah's gifts as a playwright notwithstanding, this is a

play about and starring youth, but certainly not by one. How do young muses respond to the wisdom of the aged?

"You know, we worked together so closely on this," Hannah says after a brief chuckle at the question asked. "I think this is their play as much as it is mine." ▼



We guilt this City: *Shining city* sorts emotional Baggage

DAVID BERRY / david@vancouverweekly.com

It probably shouldn't come as a surprise that an Irish playwright wrote a play that largely deals with guilt: dope up any nation with that much religion—particularly Catholicism, for which guilt is practically a sacrament—and even the ones who don't show up on Sunday are going to have a lot of issues to work through.

Still, even considering his background, Conor McPherson's *Shining City* is particularly obsessed with the subject. Part ghost story—more metaphorically than literally, though at least one character actually reports seeing the spectre of his dead wife—part psychodrama, *Shining City* strip-mines the layers of the regretful mind, with the audience becoming richer for its exhaustive efforts.

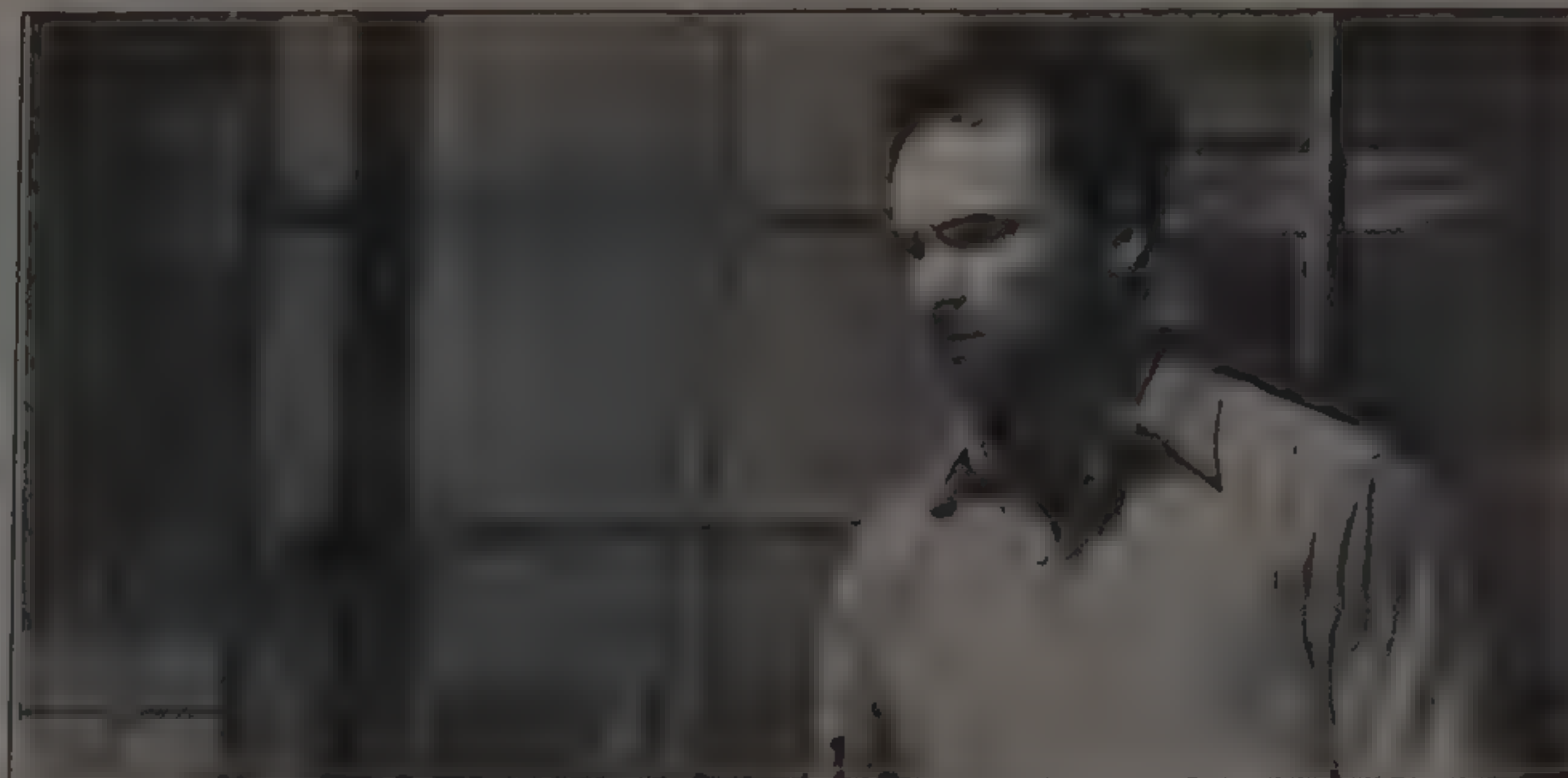
That level of penetration is what initially struck Citadel Associate Artistic Director James MacDonald, the

PREVIEW

THU, FEB 7 - SUN, FEB 24 (7:30 PM)
SHINING CITY
DIRECTED BY JAMES MACDONALD
WRITTEN BY CONOR MCPHERSON
STARRING SHAUN SMYTH, TOM WOOD,
CAROLINE CAVE, JASON CARNEW
CITADEL THEATRE (9828 - 101A AVE), \$43 - \$53

man charged with bringing McPherson's play to the Rice stage.

"What really struck me was how well he captured what it's like to be a certain age," MacDonald says. "He's got a real insight into how people's minds work as they age, and especially how the choices they make affect them. All these people have to deal with regrets, and guilt, and the baggage that comes along with living, and they do it in a very engaging, very human way: these are people who are funny, they're sad—they're very distinct, real characters."



THAT DEPTH IS decidedly necessary: the play is set in the Dublin offices of Ian (Shaun Smyth), a lapsed priest and current psychiatrist who has enough trouble healing himself, never mind the people who come in seeking the late 20th century's preferred form of absolution. Over the course of the

play, Ian not only has to deal with the aforementioned deceased widower (Tom Wood), but a deteriorating relationship with his girlfriend (Caroline Cave) and a broke, rough-around-the-edges new father (Jason Carnew). As Ian delves deeper into their problems, he comes to understand more of his

own, patients helping doctor as much as the other way 'round.

Still, for MacDonald, the play isn't so much about finding the solution as it is confronting the problem: McPherson doesn't provide a lot of answers so much as implore you to go off and look for them yourself, because there are some horrible consequences if you don't (something McPherson, a notoriously hard drinker, knows from experience).

"I think really that ultimately what he's saying is that you have to deal with these things, and if you don't, they're going to consume you," MacDonald says. "I've been sort of comparing it to defragmenting a hard drive: you've got all these circuits going in all these different directions, and if you don't sort them out and get everything in order, eventually you're just going to stop working." ▼

What We Wore tells students' stories

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vancouverweekly.com

Instead of cloud-shrouded ivory towers, universities can be thought of as bustling towns, microcosms of mainstream society that tend to be more middlebrow and middle class than the popular imagination generally allows. As such, *What We Wore: 100 Years at the University of Alberta as Told Through Clothing* is relevant beyond its primary intention as a document of life at the institution since its 1908 inception—it's the first of several centenary projects the U of A plans—and proves an intriguing barometer of the evolving zeitgeist of the past century.

Curator Lucie Heins focuses *What We Wore* into thematic chapters that reflect the trajectory of student experience and the constant presence of faculty and administration, punctuated by extraordinary historical circumstance. To assemble the show, Heins drew from the extensive collection of apparel archived by the Department of Human Ecology, plus photos and objects from university vaults, and was informed by alumni recollections in Ellen Schoeck's 2007 mammoth text *I Was There*. Those human-scale reminiscences of detail and mood contextualize the artifacts and images in *What We Wore*, bringing life to the outfits in the exhibition by conjuring the people who wore them as they worked, studied and played.

The show's introduced with headgear from Froshes of yore, the occasionally terrifying, often humiliating period of hazing first-years endured before it became the more hospitable yet still cringeworthy Week of Welcome. The cheap beanies and straw boaters are almost mythically collegiate, evoking a simpler and more rigid era, one where a freshman class lacked a diversity of backgrounds and motivations. The templates of life have opened up over the past 30 years or so: it'd be unthinkable to slap a silly cap on a middle-aged woman



PREVIEW

UNTIL SAT, MAR 8
WED - SAT (12 - 5 PM)
WHAT WE WORE
100 YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
AS TOLD THROUGH CLOTHING
U OF A MUSEUMS' GALLERY A, TELUS CENTRE

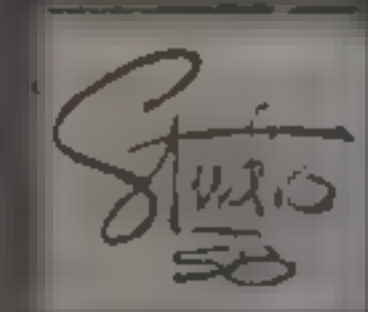
returning for a degree after raising a family.

A SLACKENING OF FORMALITY is re-encountered throughout the show, clothes telling that story vividly: starched aprons on displayed student nurse uniforms are at odds with today's scrubs. Photos of young adults in attire that'd read as prim on modern conservative professionals give way to determined individualism in the '60s as dress codes are abolished. Party wear silhouettes are particularly eloquent—the show's earliest piece is a pearl-encrusted cream gown from the 1910s, which covered a (tiny)

woman neck-to-foot-to-wrist. Dresses clustered around it mark subsequent decades, revealing progressively more skin and form, until an apex is reached in the late '60s with a graphic mod paper mini. (The show's a must-see for clotheshorses, male or female—from letterman sweaters to cocktail frocks to Dynasty-worthy sequined monstrosities, it's all inspiring garb.)

Some pieces speak even more clearly to the divide between generations: about 20 feet away from the glibbist frosh hat—a baby bonnet in green and gold from 1946—is a helmet destined for the battlefields of WWI. Steps away from this, above a contemporaneous athletic cardigan, a photo of the rugby team—also destined for the battlefields of WWI. Most didn't come home.

We wear the innocence or experience of our era as surely as we do its clothes. ▼



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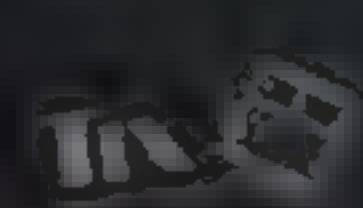
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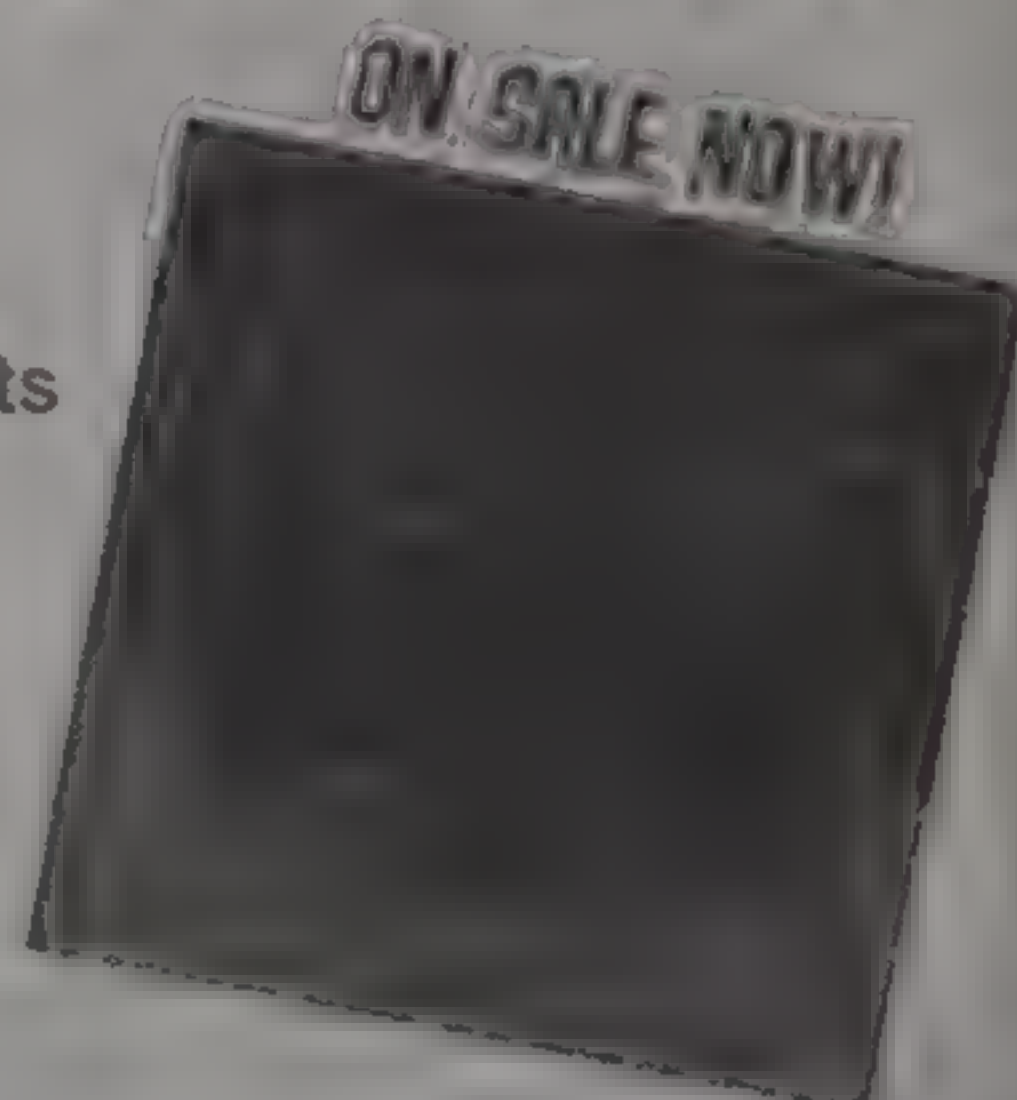
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3. Levon Helm - Dirt Farmer (vangaurd)
4. Corb Lund - Horse Soldier! Horse Soldier! (stony plain)
5. Robert Plant & Alison Krauss - Raising Sound (rounder)
6. Iron & Wine - The Shepherds Dog (sub pop)
7. Sam Baker - Pretty World (sam baker)
8. O.S.T. - I'm Not There (columbia)
9. Hayden - In Field & Town (hardwood)
10. Matt Costa - Unfamiliar Faces (brushfire)
11. Cat Power - Jukebox (matador)
12. Drive By Truckers - Brighter Than Creation's Dark (new west)
13. Harzel Und Gretyl - 2012: Zwanzig Zwolf (metropolis)
14. O.S.T. - Juno (rhino)
15. The Sadies - New Seasons (outside)
16. Rufus Wainwright - Does Judy At Carnegie Hall (Geffen)
17. Compadres - Buddy Where You Been? (compadres)
18. Neil Young - Chrome Dreams 2 (reprise)
19. Colleen Brown - Foot In Heart (colleen brown)
20. Samantha Schultz - Both Sides (samantha schultz)
21. Ray Bonneville - Goin' By Feel (red house)
22. Daft Punk - Alive 2007 (virgin)
23. Jose Gonzalez - In Our Nature (imperial)
24. Marah - Angels Of Destruction (yep roc)
25. Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez - Live From The Ruhr Triennale (trainwrec)
26. Bettye LaVette - The Scene Of The Crime (anti)
27. The Weakerthans - Reunion Tour (anti)
28. Wu Tang Clan - 8 Diagrams (loud)
29. Dion - Son Of Skip James (the orchard)
30. Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings - 100 Days 100 Nights (daptone)

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Finlay puts in the time for her *Crimes*

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuvueweekly.com

As often seems to happen in life, director Kristen Finlay ended up at the helm of the *Walterdale*'s new production of *Crimes of the Heart* through a happy accident. While most directors search out a play by reading dozens of scripts, carefully considering each one, narrowing down their options and finally presenting a decision to a theatre company's artistic director, for Finlay the process of picking a play was a little different.

"I like to think that the play picked me—originally it had a different director, but they had scheduling issues and had to back out," she explains, mentioning she had dropped off a resumé to the *Walterdale* in the hopes that some sort of opportunity would come up. "[Artistic Director] Randy Brososky called me and asked if I'd like to do it, so I re-read it because I like to do that before I jump in, and then I said, 'yes.'"

Continuing her trend of good luck, Finlay oversaw auditions which had 40 people show up to try out for a total of six roles—something she says is somewhat rare in the world of community theatre and which ensured an incredibly strong cast. However, because of her empathy with actors—due at least in part to the fact that she is one herself—Finlay doesn't run the kind of auditions most actors are used to.

"I'm not a big fan of people coming in and doing monologues, because I'm also an actor and I hate that," she says, describing her auditioning



PREVIEW

THU, FEB 7 - SAT, FEB 16 (8 PM)
CRIMES OF THE HEART
DIRECTED BY KRISTEN FINLAY
WRITTEN BY BETH HENLEY
STARRING RHANDI NEAL, MONICA ROBERTS AND
ITAMONIE TUNWILL
WALTERDALE PLAYHOUSE (10322 - 83 AVE), \$12 - 16

process as a combination of cold reading and a bit of direction to see how well her potential actors respond to instructions. "Plus it just shows you how well someone does the one thing they've been rehearsing for weeks and weeks. I want to play with them and see what they can do."

THE PLAY, A DARK comedy that centres around three sisters from a dysfunctional family who are incredibly unlucky at love—one never married, another fled a love affair looking for

stardom which never materialized and the third is out on bail for shooting her husband and neglecting to call the authorities until she had quenched her thirst with lemonade, which she had to make first—has been a very popular play since it was first performed in the early '80s, having inspired a movie, the Pixies' song "Gigantic" and an upcoming off-Broadway revival.

"It's the only American play to ever win the Pulitzer Prize before it hit Broadway," Finlay enthuses, before stopping to consider why it has endured for so long. "I think it comes off as very authentic, certainly for actors and directors there's so much you can work with when mining the text. For an audience, when you have actors that can delve that deep, it becomes very authentic for them, too." ▽

Artists need money, too

ART

PRAIRIE ARTSTERS

AMY FUNG
amy@vuvueweekly.com

Last week Alberta's Conservative government at last thawed out their provincial arts funding. Frozen since the 1980s with no adjustment to price inflation, Alberta's arts funding has since consistently ranked as one of the lowest in the country. Riding on our latest boom, the Conservatives plan on investing \$12 million over the next year into Alberta culture, which under their new policy will also include arts and heritage along with sport and recreation. Most of that investment will be absorbed and dispersed by the Alberta Foundation of the Arts, but it is unclear as to how the government will be implementing its newfound appreciation for the arts.

A coordinating team will be created to ensure the new "Spirit of Alberta" policy is met, and there's some positive statistics released about the interconnectedness of economic prosperity and social well-being, but it remains to be seen how a province so starved of proper arts infrastructure and appreciation will adjust to digesting the sudden importance of culture.

From the professional point of view, increasing funding is always welcome, but the mood at the Jubilee last week was undeniably affected with a hardened cynicism at being tossed a bone

after years of neglect. Premier Stelmach's acknowledgment that culture is essential to the legacy and future of Alberta has drawn nonplussed responses. The cold response may be due to the "we don't need you" attitude that most organizations have assumed in order to survive, but reading through the cultural policy booklet, there are more reasons to be discerning.

FOR ONE, there is an emphasis on bringing the diversity of culture to Albertans to increase the quality of life throughout Alberta—which is a fine thing—but there is no plan to ensure or aid artists and creators just trying to live and work in an ever costly Alberta. That may be funneled through AFA funding, but the government should not have to wean the entire artistic population. Professional artists are still not recognized as professionals, even though their overall contribution is finally receiving due merit. This sentiment is reinforced with the simple lack of photo credits in the policy program, where the work of photographers, dancers and sculptors promote the idea of culture, but the creators themselves go unacknowledged (and in some cases, were not even consulted for use in the publication.)

With an election set to go for Mar 3, the Liberal caucus revealed their own arts policy, shortly before the Conservatives big announcement. Although most of

Kevin Taft's speech only reinforced the Liberal's consistent support for the arts with grand (but frivolous) plans like creating a provincial arts festival and conflating arts into tourism, there was at least mention of exploring the status of implementing an artist legislation to provide rights and benefits to full-time artists and cultural workers.

Both announcements came just days after UK-based cultural critic John Holden was in town lecturing on the matter of "Art & Politics." Based in the cultural think tank, Demos, Holden identified there are three values to culture: the intrinsic, the unabashed art-for-art's-sake quality; instrumental, the benefit to society and culture's regenerative effect on economy and well being; and institutional, the covering the interaction and implementation of culture into communities. Like the principles of public, private and state-run corporations, no single value is greater than another; all three must work together to create a balanced and healthy cultural sector.

In the wake of a new cultural attitude, artists need to start generating viable sources of revenue with their work, because art is also a business, and ideally a government will be informed enough to create the network and support to make this happen. ▽

Amy Fung is also the author of prairieartists.com.

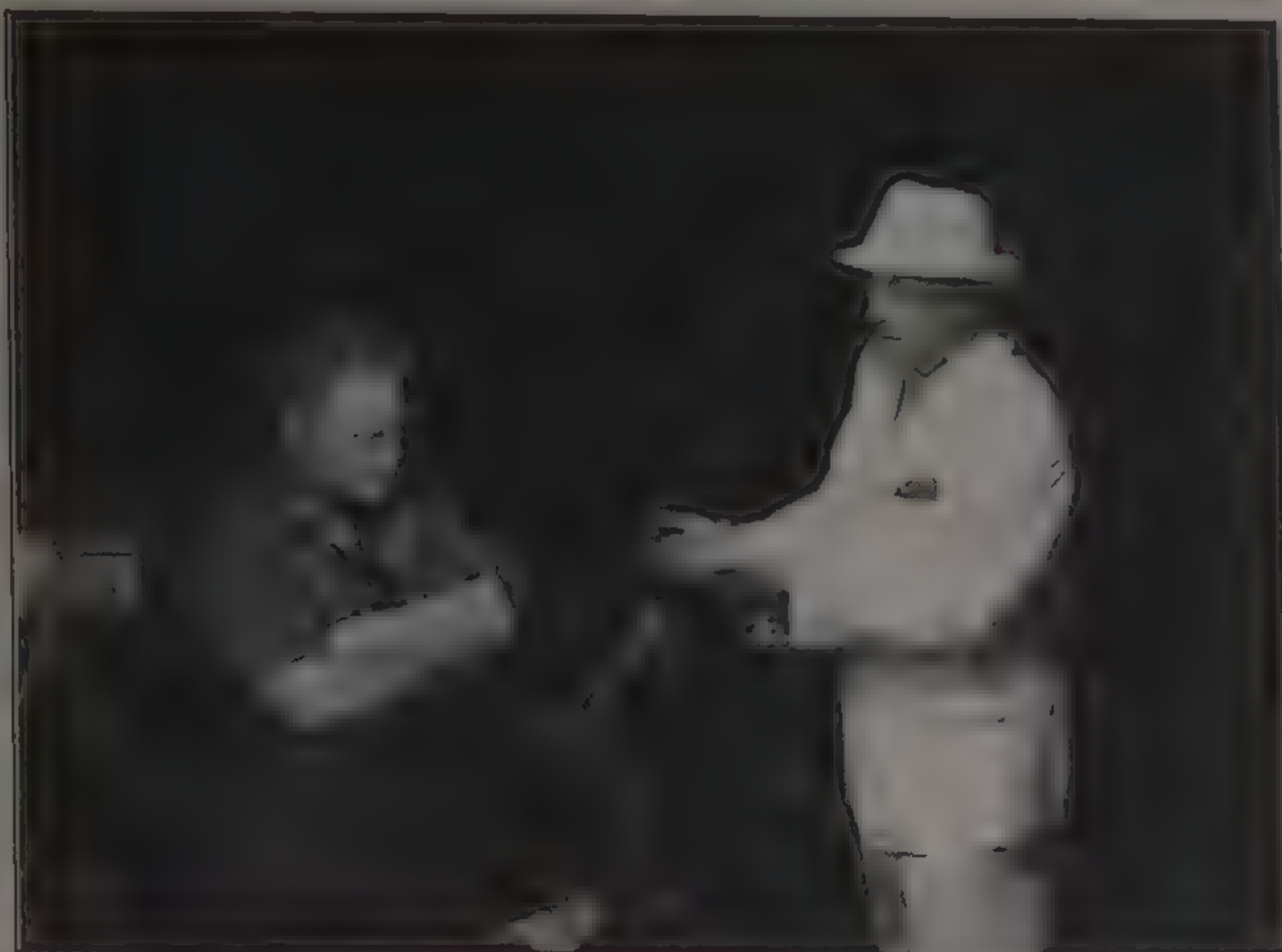
Dischord: *Sound System* proves risky but uneven

CALVIN KILGORE / calvin@vuweekly.com

System Theatre may be a young company, but they're certainly not adverse to taking risks. Packing two separate plays together under one banner without an intermission is a bold artistic venture; having your untested show open the same weekend as the explosively acclaimed *Frankenstein*, whether you planned for it or not, is just plain ballsy. But riding its own buzz from a very successful Fringe outing (a version of Arthur Miller's *Creation of the World and other Business*), System Theatre's dual script showcase *The Sound System* offers an interesting but lopsided look into the relationship between music and man.

First on the bill, *The Century of Music* collects a series of vignettes to point out connections between music and particular moments in history. Time-travelling from 581 AD through the modern era to almost 100 years into the future, the moments are mostly fictional or altered, but do well to prove their point; a particularly poignant one takes place in present-day Macedonia, where sex-trade workers sing the songs of the Underground Railroad to escape their servitude.

The other moments work well too, and there's a strange satisfaction in having a skit about the Pope segueway to Woodstock '69 with the guitar riff from "Bad to the Bone." Only one scene falls flat: it's set in 2201, in "Warzone 21," and it's the black sheep of *Music's* flock of sketches, with the music/history parallel getting overshadowed with a weak "the future is terrible" situation.



REVUE

UNTIL SAT, FEB 9 (8 PM)
THE SOUND SYSTEM
WRITTEN BY NICOLE BODNARESK, BRIAN BERGUM
DIRECTED BY STITAN IZIVAROSKI
STARRING ERIC NYLAND, AMBER BISSENETTE,
BERGUM, JUSTIN SPROULE, CHRISTINE LESIAK
PCL THEATRE, TRANSALTA ARTS BARN
(10330-84 AVE), \$15/\$18

WITH ONLY a brief transition that doesn't vary much from the ones that separated *The Century of Music's* scenes, we're dropped into the much more structured world of *One Step Forward*, which seems like an incomplete snippet of what should've been a longer, stand-alone show.

Following the inner-workings of a band as the members haphazardly attempt to set up for a gig, or even assemble in the same room, the script of Brian Bergum (who also

plays the band's vocalist, Dash) is all set up and no knock-down. We gain some insight into the characters—Dash's rampant alcoholism, the flares of romance and the general tension within the group—but nothing gets a proper amount of time to develop deeper than surface level. The actors do the best they can with their material, but in sticking to the under-an-hour timeframe—and reduced audience, with *Frankenstein* sucking audiences into Catalyst Theatre a few hundred metres away—the comedic quips came off as thin and incomplete.

The Sound System isn't a bad show; it's a risky one, and that only paid off in the first act. That such a young company is willing to take a chance is admirable; it's just disappointing that *The Sound System* doesn't resonate as deeply as it could have. ♥

Students broadcast themselves in NewTube

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Though the U of A has a fairly deserved reputation as one of the best theatre schools in the country, the average theatregoer in Edmonton rarely gets a chance to see even half of it. With main stage shows reserved for the select Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts (usually abbreviated to BFA and MFA, particularly in conversation) students, the majority of the Drama faculty keeps most of their work to the confines of their classroom.

Public exposure is as vital as sunlight for most theatre types, though, so that arrangement only works so well. That's a big reason why the U of A started its New Works festival, now entering its eighth incarnation, *NewTube*. As festival producer/Master's drama student Brian Batchelor explains, though the name changes every year, the goal remains the same: to expose Drama students to a much wider audience.

"This is really about providing an avenue for students to get involved in the experience of making theatre" says Batchelor, who's been involved with the festival in some capacity since its inauguration. "There's only so much you can learn in a classroom: at some point, you have to get your stuff out there, and this gives everyone a chance to actually see their work on stage."

AS WAS THE CASE in previous years, four plays from student playwrights were selected to receive a full production, with an additional two receiving staged readings. As an added bonus, this year the playwrights got to workshop their play with a variety of local emerging

PREVIEW

TUE, FEB 12 - SAT, FEB 16 (7:30 PM)
NEWTUBE: 8TH ANNUAL NEW WORKS FESTIVAL
FEATURING HALF A LEAGUE, A POLITICAL
DRAMA, SNOW PATROL, 13 ENCOUNTERS
TIMMS CENTRE FOR THE ARTS (112 ST 8 & 87 AVE)

artists, a process that Batchelor says is as rare as it is valuable for young playwrights trying to establish themselves.

"Something I think we really wanted to emphasize this year is that playwrighting is really a process" he points out. "I think the feedback the playwrights got from the workshops helped them immensely, and really it's just one more step we could offer them in the sort of natural process of a play."

That focus on process is something that Batchelor sees as vital for the festival as it continues on into the future. As he explains, in an arts climate as competitive and underfunded—taken election promises be damned—as Alberta's, any practical knowledge an institution like the U of A can pass along to its student-artists is vital.

"In a place that's as culturally unsupported as Alberta can be, usually the first things to go are these kinds of development programs, and play development isn't any different—it's very hard to get the full, proper development, especially when you're just starting out," Batchelor says. "I think it's really special that a place like the University can do something like this, and give people that chance."

"The playwrights get to write, the directors get to direct and the actors get to act," he continues. "And really that's what they want to do." ♥

Millard Kaufman's *Cherries* prove tasty treat

MARSHALL WATSON / marshall@vuweekly.com

It was almost 60 years ago that Millard Kaufman and John Hubley co-created the nearsighted cartoon klutz Mr Magoo. Not long after that, in the mid-'50s Kaufman was twice nominated for Oscars for his screenplays *Take the High Ground* and *Bad Day at Black Rock*. Needless to say I was, at the very least, intrigued when I found out that, over half a century later, he was publishing his first novel, *Bowl of Cherries*, through Dave Eggers's brazenly youthful publishing house McSweeney's—Kaufman was 86 when he began the book and 90 at the time it was published (he turns 91 in March).

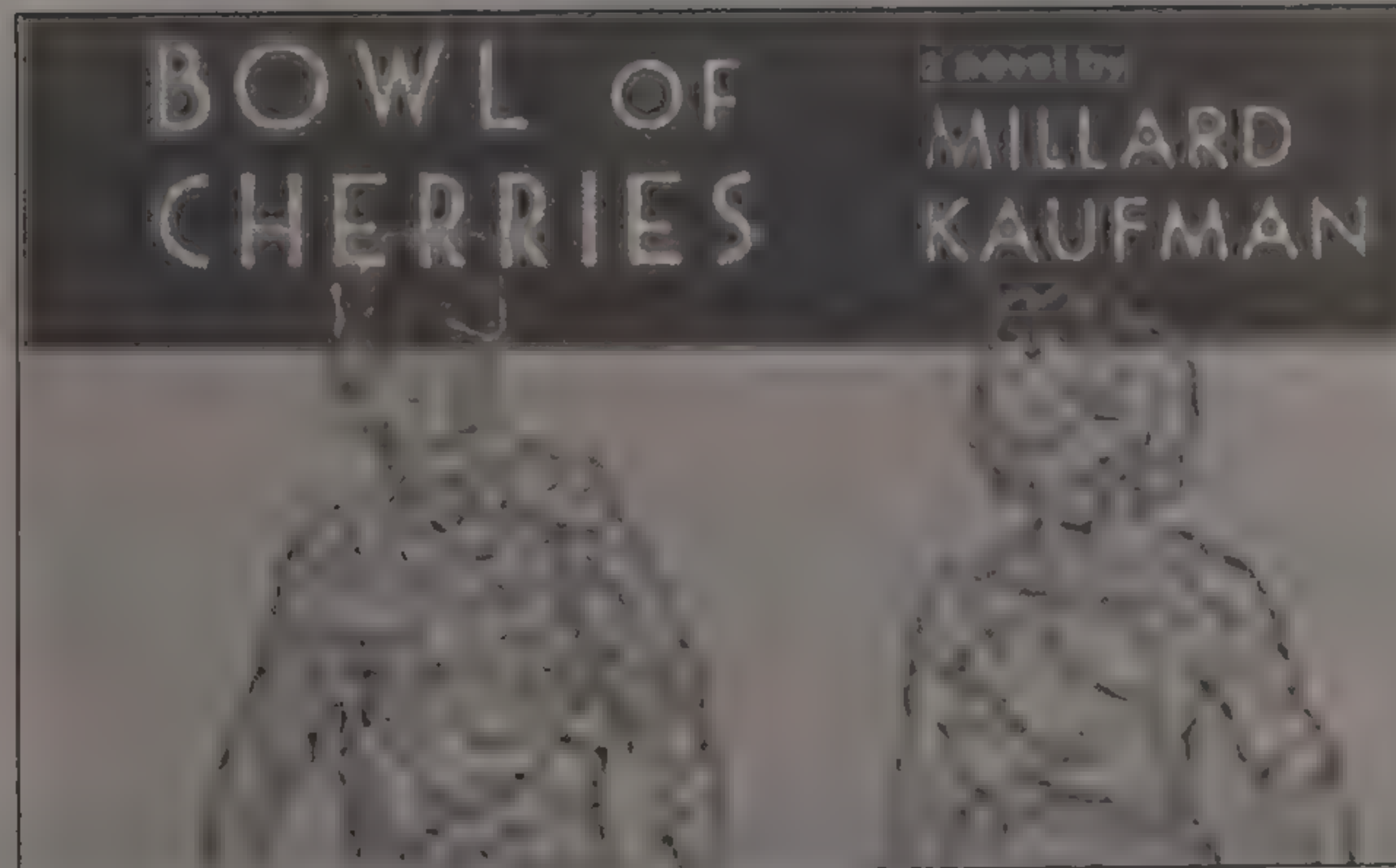
Bowl of Cherries, however, is one of the most refreshing and youthfully cavalier books I have read in years. It tells the story of Judd Breslau, an absurdly intelligent 14-year-old losing interest in English literature doctoral studies at Yale. When his father abruptly and mysteriously vanishes and his mother runs off to Colorado to pursue employment with the only publishing company who has ever

BOOKS

BOWL OF CHERRIES
BY MILLARD KAUFMAN
MCSWEENEY'S
325 PP, \$22

published her meandering and dilapidated poetry, Judd abandons his studies and shacks up (literally) with an eccentric and ramshackle Baltimore think tank where his job is to somehow inform the movement of a domino with sounds waves created by playing the tuba. It is there where he falls for the daughter of his boss and would-be-mentor, his love for whom sends Judd on a journey of slapstick adventures that lead him to (among other places) a farm in Colorado, a porn studio in New York City and the small capital of the province of Assama in Iraq.

While the present-day war drags on to their north, a friend of Judd's from the Baltimore think tank becomes King of Assama and shortly thereafter arrests Judd and sentences him to death—it turns out that Judd's entire story is being told to us from within a



prison cell within a building made of a material that consists of mud and straw and human shit.

AMAZINGLY, THAT ONLY begins to describe the complexities and absurdities that make up *Bowl of Cherries*. Based even on that truncated synopsis, I can understand how some other reviews have criticized the book on

the grounds of lacking focus or overall cohesion. However, as they explain away their misunderstandings about the book claiming such things as an irreconcilable age difference between the author and his main character (76 years) they are blind to the things that make *Bowl of Cherries*—which is, it bears repeating, Kaufman's first novel—work so very well.

Kaufman is an incredibly skilled storyteller: all of the slapstick adventures that ultimately lead Judd to Iraq contain subtle lessons that enable Judd to, in the end, quietly leave the "puppets of passion" with which he has become somehow involved to their own misguided and self-destructive devices. Kaufman avoids the looming potential for a painfully cynical finale and instead carries us towards an eloquence and understanding that maybe only surviving 90 years of human drama and disastrous history could enable.

Ultimately Judd is, at least emotionally, able to escape all those around him who ambitiously, though blindly struggle to become famous under the guise of "saving humanity" and eventually end up stuck with a future as meandering and futile as Judd's mother's poetry—if they are lucky enough to escape the bomb's explosion. (Oh, right: there's a giant explosion, too.)

I can only hope that the next 90 years of my life contain stories half as zany and refreshing and relevant as those in *Bowl of Cherries*. ♥

STOP THE ART

Are you a visual artist, a painter, a designer, a graphic designer or someone with an eye for art and some free time on your hands? We want to see your ideas for our next issue. Submit your ideas of how you would paint this VUE cover. You can do anything you want as long as the base colour remains yellow and there is a VUE Weekly cover somewhere.



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step 3: implementation



step 4: admiration



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DANCE

ALBERTA BALLET—DANGEROUS LIAISONS
by Jeanne L. Macdonald • Ee-choreographed by Jean
L. Macdonald • Feb. 15-16 (8pm) • Tickets at
1-800-363-6363

FACO PEÑA—FLAMENCO DANCE COMPANY
Timms Centre (428-1414) • A Compás! primal
• Feb. 17 (8pm) • \$39-\$44/\$30 (student)
• Ticketmaster box office

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

AGNES BUGERA GALLERY 12310 Jasper Ave (482-2854) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **NOCTUARY:** Paintings by Gordon Harper, Ian Rawlinson, and David Wilson • Feb. 16-29 • Opening reception: Sat, Feb. 16 (2-4pm), artists in attendance

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL 10186-106 St (488-6611) • **THE RECIPIENTS EXHIBITION:** 2007 Alberta Craft Awards; until Feb. 16 • **CONTAINED—PROTECTION OR PRISON:** until Apr. 19

ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA Enterprise Square, 100, 10230 Jasper Ave (422-6223) • Open Mon-Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm (4-8pm free); Sat-Sun 11am-5pm • Drop-In Tours: Sat and Sun (12:30, 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30pm) • **GENERATION:** Featuring 9 contemporary North American artists whose work incorporates the images, ideals and anxieties of North American youth; until Mar. 24 • **SMALL:** Artistic responses to our sense of balance, proportion and scale; until Mar. 24 • **WINDOW DRESSING:** Shane Knapakevich focuses on the history and politics of department store window displays using the historic 102 St. windows of the former Bay department store; until Feb. 18 • **RE-DRAWING THE LINE:** Artworks from the U of A's graduate studios; until Feb. 17 • **FH. VARLEY: PORTRAITS INTO THE LIGHT:** Portraits by one of the Group of Seven; until Feb. 17 • **Imagining Wow:** Generation artist Demian Petruslyn hosts this live interactive gaming session; Feb. 9 (11am-4pm) • Members free; \$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student); \$5 (6-12yrs)/free (5yrs and under)/\$20 (family-2 adults, 4 children)

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd fl, 10217-106 St (439-9532) • **LOVE IS SIMPLE:** Artworks by Kat Vedah • **EAT MINE RAW:** Artworks by Shelley Rothenburger and new artworks by ArtsHab residents • Feb. 7-Mar. 13 • Opening reception: Thu, Feb. 7 (7pm)

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 1100 95 Ave (461-3427) • Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sat: 10am-5pm • **Group show featuring artworks by the artist members;** until Feb. 15

CHRISTL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 101 Whyte Ave (498-1984) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • Closed over Christmas • **3 RIVERS—THE ARNO, THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN AND THE PEMBINA:** Large oil paintings by Christl Bergstrom with smaller paintings

CITY HALL Sir Winston Churchill Sq. • **BELOW ZERO: REFLECTIONS OF A PRAIRIE WINTER:** Featuring artworks interpreting prairie winters • Feb. 15-27

DESIGN INTERCHANGE Enterprise Square, 10230 Jasper Ave (780-492-9128) • Open: 7 days a week 7am-11pm • Design works by students and staff in design studios at the department of Art and Design at the U of A • Until Feb. 20

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY Main Fl Atrium, Extension Centre, 10230 Jasper Ave (780-492-9128) • Open: 7 days a week 7am-11pm • **WRITE/PRINT:** Collaborations between creative writing and print-making students from the Faculty of Arts at the U of A • Until Feb. 20

FINE ARTS BUILDING GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 2-5pm • **RESONANT LANDSCAPE:** Paintings by Brenda Kim Christiansen • **BETWEEN STRUGGLE AND SPARE** Printworks by Jewel Shaw • Feb. 5-23 • Opening reception: Tue, Feb. 12 (7-10pm)

FRINGE GALLERY Paint Spot basement, 10618 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • **AFTER HOURS 3:** Artworks by the Paint Spot artists • Until Feb. 29 • Opening reception: Fri, Feb. 8 (5-7pm)

GALLERY A U of A Museums and Collections Services, Main Floor, TELUS Centre for Professional Development, U of A Campus (492-5834) • Open Wed-Sat 12-5pm • **WE ARE WHAT WE WORE—100**

Years at the University of Alberta as Told Through Clothing: Featuring clothing and textiles from the Clothing and Textile Collection • Until Mar. 8

GALLERY AT MILNER, STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Sq (496-7030) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-9pm; Sat 9am-6pm; Sun 1-5pm • **HERBARIUM OF A COMMON MEADOW:** Photographs by Pawel Stroemich • Until Feb. 28

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (428-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **Main Gallery: BETWEEN THE LINES: DIGITIZED DIALECTS AND ENCODED TRADITIONS:** Artworks by multimedia Cree artist, Jude Norris • **Front Room: SPACEFARERS OF THE EXPANSE:** Artworks—a mythological universe by Tony Baker • Both shows run until Feb. 16

JEFF ALLEN GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Thu 9am-4pm • **EXPECTATIONS:** Abstracts, landscapes and floral encaustic paintings by Lorna Kemp • Until Feb. 28 • Opening reception: Wed, Feb. 13 (6:30-8:30pm)

JOHNSON GALLERY (NORTH) 11817-80 St (479-8424) Open Tue-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Joan P. Barry, Remie Genest, Keith Nunas, Norval Morrisseau, Don Winkelaar; photos by Bob McGovey and pottery by Noboru Kubo • Through February • **JOHNSON GALLERY (SOUTH)** 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 10am-5pm • Artworks by Marion Barker, Joe Haire, Audrey Pfannmuller, Dave Ripley, Wendy Risdale, George Weber; pottery by Noboru Kubo • Through February

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St (423-5353) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sat noon-5pm • **ProjEx Room: LAND REPRODUCTION:** Artworks in progress by Megann Christensen • **Main Space: SONIC CUBES.** Artworks by Catherine Bechard and Sabin Hudon; until Feb. 9 • **53 WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR LOVER:** An anti-valentine's fund raiser in support of Latitude 53; featuring DJs, a fashion show, and art and other goodies in the silent auction; Feb. 16 (8pm-2am); \$8 (member)/\$10 (non-member)/\$12 (door)

THE LOFT GALLERY A.J. Ottewill Arts Centre, 590 Broadmoor Blvd, Sherwood Park (449-4443) • Open Thu 5-9pm; Sat 10am-4pm • **ABSTRACTS:** Artworks by the members of the Art Society of Strathcona County • Until Feb. 29

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-8pm • **FOUR OUTSIDE VIEWS:** Landscape paintings by Pam Wilman, Adeline Rockett, Sophia Podryhula-Shaw, and Donna Miller; until Feb. 10 • **FUSED BY SILVER:** Black and white photography by the Monochrome Guild; Feb. 16-Apr. 13

MCPAG 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-4pm; Sun 10am-6:30pm • **LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER:** Masks and dolls by Marjane Matsunaga-Turnbull and Miya Turnbull; until Feb. 22 • **Dining Room Gallery:** Photography by Jenny Delaney; until Mar. 20

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 Ste Anne St, St. Albert (459-1528) • **PRINCESS LOUISE—A WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE:** An exhibit about Princess Louise Alberta, the daughter of Queen Victoria and namesake of our province • Until Feb. 17

MINA MAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS 111 Ave (474-7611) • Open Mon, Wed, Fri 9:30am-2:30pm; Tue, Thu 9:30am-4pm and 6-8pm •

OUT OF THE FIRE STUDIO 12214 Jasper Ave (378-0240) • Original paintings by gallery artists

PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • New artworks by Robert Christie and Jonathan Forrest

PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY 2 12304 Jasper Ave (455-7479) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • Artworks by Gregory Hardy, Robert Wiseman, and Frances Thomas

PORTAL ART GALLERY 9414-91 St (702-7522) • Open Tue-Fri 12-8pm; Sat 12-7pm, by appointment • **LIFTED:** Artworks by Darryl Boldt • Until Feb. 28

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron St, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-8pm) • **WINDOWS:** Artworks by Terry Reynoldson; until Feb. 29 • Drop-in art for the Artist at Heart: Feb. 7 (9pm); \$12

ROWLES AND COMPANY 10130-103 St, Mezz (426-4035) • **URBANSCAPES:** Paintings by Pauline Ulliach. Featuring paintings and sculptures by various artists

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **NEW PAINTINGS:** Landscape paintings by Jim Stokes • Until Feb. 19

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • **Main Gallery: OUR PARTICLES ARE IN MOTION:** Printworks by Patrick Bulas based on looking at theoretical phenomena in scientific journals as well as his personal experience • Until Feb. 23

SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY 35-5 Ave, Spruce Grove (962-0664) • **ABSTRACT GEOMETRICS.** Artworks by Lili Vanderlaan • Until Feb. 16

THE STUDIO GALLERY 11 Perron St (460-5993) •

Open Thu 12-8pm, Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-5pm • **SUN REALM.** Artworks by Pat Wagensveld • Until Mar. 1

TELLUS WORLD OF SCIENCE 11211-142 St (452-9100) • **MAGIC PLANET.** Real time weather and seismic data; daily • **FOOD FOR HEALTH • LOAFING AROUND—THE SCIENCE OF BREAD:** Sat, Sun, holidays (11am) • **THE ALPS IN IMAX:** Daily; also playing *Dinosaurs Alive!* and *Hurricane on the Bayou* • *Exploring the Role Food Plays in Good Health:* Food for health exhibit

TU GALLERY 10718-124 St (452-9664) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm; Thu 10am-8pm • **FIVE ARTISTS, ONE LOVE:** To commemorate Black History Month, artworks by Richard Lipscombe, Carla Andrew, Shumba Ash, Lisa Mayes, and Darren Jordan • Until Mar. 5

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • Mon-Fri 10am-4pm; Sat 12-4pm • **MAELSTROM:** Artworks by Eugenia Castenada • Until Feb. 16

THE WORKS GALLERY 200, 10225-100 Ave (426-2122) • Open Mon-Fri 12-5pm • **DISCOMBOBULATION:** Paintings by Kevin Friedrich • Until Feb. 8 • Closing reception: Thu, Feb. 7 (6-9pm)

LITERARY

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ 9624-76 Ave (469-8755) • Story Slam: An opportunity for writers to share their work, explore their talents and show off • 3rd Wed every month • \$5 (donation)

CAFÉ SELECT upstairs, 8404-109 St • Reading series hosted by Rob McLennan featuring poetry and fiction • 3rd Tue every month until May (7pm door) • Tue, Feb. 19 (venue changed for this month only)

CHAPTERS—WEM Newcap Radio Stage • Booksigning of Don R Campbell's new book, *51 Success Stories from Canadian Real Estate Investors* • Thu, Feb. 7 (7pm)

STEEPS TEA LOUNGE College Plaza, 11116-82 Ave • Spoken word open mic • Last Wed every month

TALES—THE ALBERTA LEAGUE ENCOURAGING STORYTELLING *Proctor's Bar Grill*, 10475-80 Ave (932-4409) • Story Café: open mic opportunity • 1st Thu every month; 7-9pm; \$5 • *Love'em or Leave 'em, Story Café* featuring storytellers Bethany Ellis, Dawn Blue, and Jenny Frost; Feb. 7 (7-9pm)

TALES—THE ALBERTA LEAGUE ENCOURAGING STORYTELLING *Carrot*, City Arts Centre, 10943-84 Ave; Monthly Storytelling Circle: Everyone welcome to tell stories or to come and listen; 2nd Fri each month through to June 2008 (8pm); \$3 admission, first time free

TALES—THE ALBERTA LEAGUE ENCOURAGING STORYTELLING *Community Arts Coffeehouse*, 9351-118 Ave • **TALES at the Carrot:** Featuring storytellers Bethany Ellis and Renée Englot, and special guest Kevin MacKenzie • Feb. 12 (7:30pm) • \$10 (door)

3 BANANAS CAFÉ Sir Winston Churchill Sq (428-2200) • **WOW—Wired on Words:** A creative writing process for amateurs and professionals • Meetings Sun (11am-1:15pm) for info e-mail bewell.2008@gmail.com • \$10 (donation)

UPPER CRUST CAFÉ 10909-86 Ave (422-8174) • The Poets' Haven Monday Nights weekly reading series presented by Stroll of Poets • Every Mon night (7pm) • \$5 (door)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu (8:30pm), \$11; Fri (8:30pm), \$20; Sat (8pm and 10:30pm), \$20 • Every Wed (8:30pm): Wacky Wednesday; \$5 • Chris Warren; Feb. 7-9 • Chris Clobber; Feb. 14-16

THE COMIC STRIP 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St (483-5999) • Open nightly 8pm, Fri 8pm and 10:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm, Sun 8pm • Hit or Miss Mondays • Alternative Comedy Night: Featuring Local Talent; Tue, Feb. 5 • Rick Bronson with Special Guests; Wed, Feb. 6 • Caroline Rhea, Christa Haberstock, and Rick Bronson; Feb. 7-9 • Rick Bronson with Special Guest; Sun, Feb. 10 • Alternative Comedy Night; Tue, Feb. 12 • Wayne Flemming, Kelly Soloduka, and The Bear's Paul Brown; Feb. 13-17

THE LAUGH SHOP (YUK YUK'S) Londonderry Mall, 6606-137 Ave (481-9857) • Open Wed-Thu 8pm, Fri-Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Tuesday Amateur Night followed by professional headliner • Wednesday Comedy Challenge

THEATRE

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park (449-3378) • A show for kids starring kids • Feb. 16-17 (2pm and 7:30pm), Feb. 18 (2pm) • \$24 (adult)/\$16 (child) at Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Citadel Shochor Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Music By Alan Menken,

lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice, book by Linda Woolverton, directed by Bob Baker, and starring John Ulyatt as Lumière • Until Feb. 24

CETTE FILLE-LÀ La Cité, 8627 rue Marie-Anne-Gaboury, 91 St (469-8400) • L'UniThéâtre • By Joan MacLeod, translated by Olivier Choimère • Feb. 14-16 (8pm); Feb. 17 (2pm) • \$23 (adult)/\$15 (student)

CHIMPROVI Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month until July 24

CRIMES OF THE HEART Walterdale Playhouse, 10322-83 Ave (439-2845) • By Beth Henley, directed by Kristen M. Finlay • Travel to Mississippi as the three Magrath sisters take turns serving tears, torment and chocolate cake. A heartbreakingly humorous tale that takes a compassionate look into the lives of good people in the middle of wrong choices • Until Feb. 16 (8pm), Sun matinee (2pm) • \$12-\$16 at TIX on the Square, 420-1757, door; Two-For-One: Thu, Feb. 7

DIE-NASTY Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • Improv soap opera every Mon (8pm)

FAMOUS PUPPET DEATH SCENES Roxy Theatre, 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Theatre Network, by the Old Trout Puppet Workshop. Starring the Old Trout puppet masters Peter Balkwill, Don Brinsmead, Pityu Kenderes and Judd Palmer. The time has come to face our fears, look death in the face, start laughing and feel good about it—comical, tragic, poignant and beautiful • Previews: Feb. 12-13 • Feb. 14-Mar. 2

FRANKENSTEIN 8529 Gateway Blvd, (420-1757) • Catalyst Theatre presents Jonathan Christenson's adaptation of Mary Shelley's novel • Until Feb. 24 (Thu-Sun 8pm) • \$25 (adult)/\$20 (student/senior) at TIX on the Square

FRAZIER: THE COLLEGE YEARS *Timmins Centre for the Arts* Theatre, 8882-170 St (484-2424) • Join us as we seek to answer some questions about Frazier Crane All this will be mixed to your favourite '60s Motown/R&B music • Until Apr. 6

HEY LADIES PART 2 Theatre Network, 10708-124 St • Electric Boogaloo, The Valentine Edition where your favourite daytime lifestyle show meets your favourite nighttime comedy jam of female fun by Leona Brausen, Cathleen Rootsart and Davina Stewart • Feb. 8 • \$20 at TIX on the Square, 420-1757; Theatre Network box office, 453-2440

LANGUAGE AND CONTENT Jekyll and Hyde Pub, 10610-100 Ave (297-3675) • Image Theatre's monthly reading series. This month's readings include Trina Davies' *West of the 3rd Meridian*; Melissa Major's solo piece *Unicorn Horns*, an adaptation of Roald Dahl's *The Swan*, and an installment of *My Crazy Roommate*. Also featured is Kurt Spenrath's new play *The Trillionaires* • Last Mon every month (7pm door, 8pm show) • Pay-what-you-can (suggested donation \$5)

LOVE LETTERS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave • For one night only, Shadow Theatre is presenting "Love Letters," a play about the ups and downs of true love and chasing the one who got away Starring John Hudson and Sandy Paddick, this charming play follows the relationship of two childhood friends, as remembered through their love letters to one another. • Sun, Feb. 17 (7:30pm) • \$25 at TIX on the Square

MACBETH Citadel Maclab Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • By William Shakespeare, directed by Peter Hinton, starring Benedict Campbell and Diane O'agila. When Macbeth is told that he will one day become King of Scotland, he is urged by his ambitious wife to take destiny into his own hands • Feb. 9-Mar. 2

MACGREGOR'S HARD ICE CREAM AND GLAS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (434-5564) • Shadow Theatre presents this humorous play about lost souls learning to bury the past and move on • Until Feb. 10 • Weeknights/Sun matinees: \$19 (adult)/\$16 (student/senior); Weekends: \$22 (adult)/\$19 (student/senior) at TIX on the Square

MUMP AND SMOOT IN SOMETHING *Timmins Centre for the Arts* Arts Bams (409-1910) • Fringe Theatre Adventures • The "clowns of horror" are coming out to present their first-ever Fringe hit, *Something* • Feb. 7-17 (8pm); no performance Feb. 11 • Tickets at the Fringe Theatre box office; student discount \$15 per ticket for Feb. 13 and 14

THE NEW WORKS FESTIVAL—NEW TUNE Second Playing Space, Timms Centre for the Arts, 87 Ave. 112 St, U of A • *A Political Drama* by Joel Crichton, Feb. 12, 16 (7:30pm); Feb. 14 (8:30pm); Feb. 13 (9:30pm) • *Half a League* by Scott Garland, Feb. 12, 15 (9:30pm); Feb. 13 (7:30pm); Feb. 16 (8:30pm) • *13 Encounters* by Nicole Schafenacker, Feb. 13 (7:30pm), Feb. 15 (9:30pm, 8:30pm); Feb. 16 (10:30pm) • Reading of *Adam's Eyes* by Casey Brettelle; Feb. 15-16 (5pm) • Reading of *All of the Animals* by Kyle Hinton; Feb. 15-16 (5pm) • Feb. 12-16 (7:30pm performances); Feb. 15-16 (5pm readings) • \$5; free to staged readings

THE PIANO MEN Dow Centennial Centre, 8700-84

St. Fort Saskatchewan (992 6400) • Starring Jim Witter, The Songs of Billy Joel and Elton John • Sat, Feb. 16 (8pm) • \$37.50 (adult)/\$35.50 (senior/student) at TicketMaster, 451-8000

SHINING CITY Citadel Rice Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (426-4811) • By Conor McPherson, directed by James MacDonald and starring Tom Rooney, Tom Wood, and Gina Wilkinson • A middle-aged businessman turns to a therapist after seeing the ghost of his wife • Until Feb. 24

THE SOUND SYSTEM PCL Stage, TransAlta Arts Bams, 10330 84 Ave (420-1757) • System Theatre presents two new one-act plays about music; *One Step Forward* by Brian Bergum and *The Century of Music* by Nicole Bodnarek • Until Feb. 9 (8pm) Feb. 9 (2pm) • \$18 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior) at TIX on the Square

THEATRESPORTS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have their work evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available by phone

PEACE, LOVE AND ROCK 'N' ROLL Mayfield Dinner Theatre, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Written and compiled by Will Marks. Take a wild ride back to the swingin' '60s, celebrating the band the Watousi, the British Invasion, the Beach Boys, Motown and the mini skirt • Until Feb. 17 • \$55-\$89 (buffet and show)

SHINING CITY Citadel Rice Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • By Conor McPherson, directed by James Macdonald starring Tom Rooney, Tom Wood, and Gina Wilkinson. Stricken with grief, a middle-aged businessman turns to a therapist after repeatedly seeing the ghost of his wife. The therapist, who recently left the priesthood and has set up practice in a shabby office in downtown Dublin, is struggling to keep his own demons at bay. The Rice Theatre Series is for mature audiences, content and language may not be suitable for all patrons • Until Feb. 24

WHILE WE'RE YOUNG Timms Centre for the Arts Main Stage, 86 Ave, 112 St (492-2495) • Studio Theatre • World Premiere by Don Hannah, U of A's playwright in residence, directed by Department of Drama Professor Kim McCaw. An exploration of our transition from youth into an adult world full of inherited rules, institutions and traditions • Feb. 7-16 (7:30pm); matinee Thu, Feb. 14 (12:30pm); no show Sun, Feb. 10 Gala: Sat, Feb. 9 • \$10-\$20 at TIX on the Square

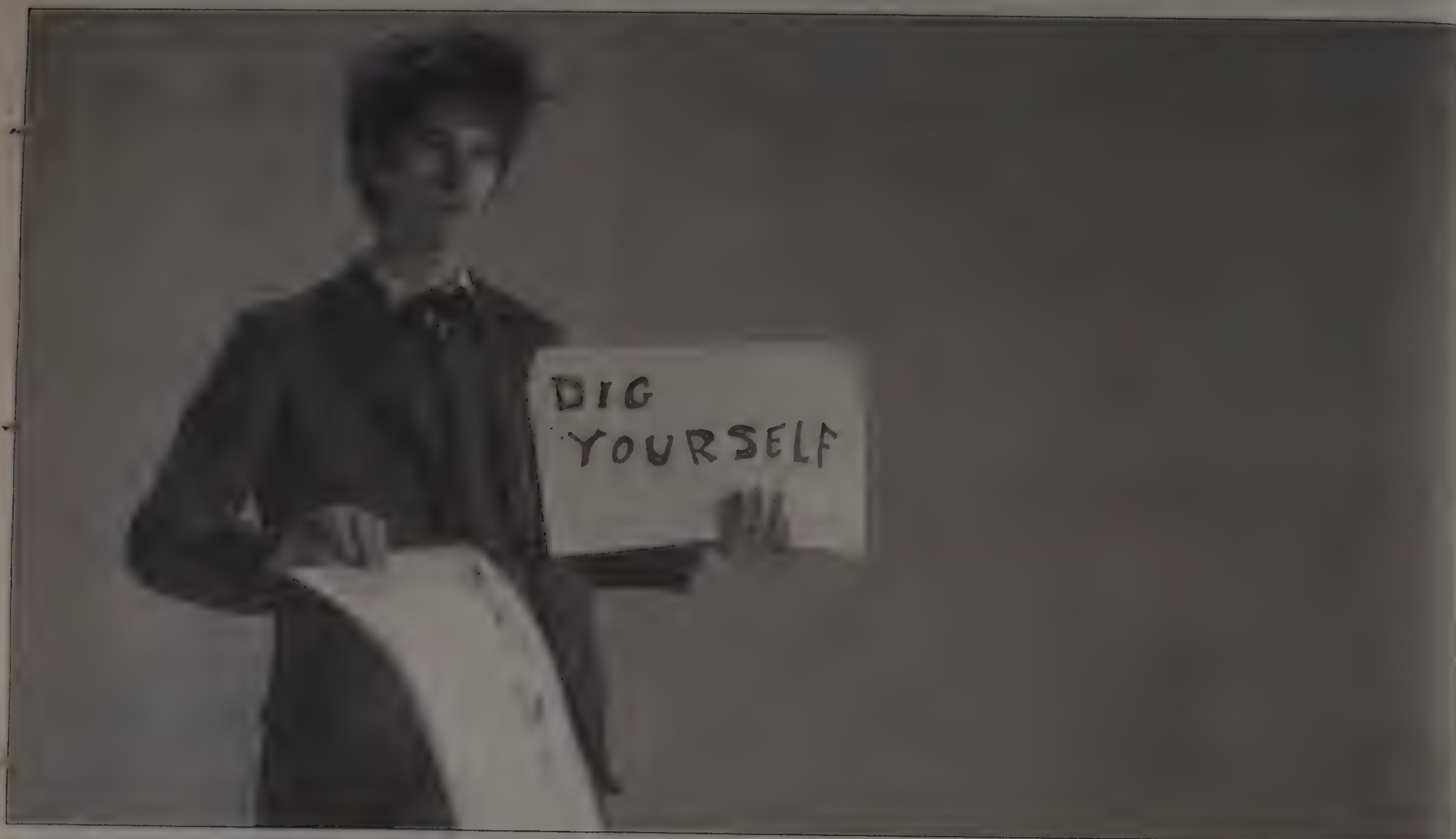
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Don't bother trying to find him: Haynes supposes six Bob Dylans

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vueweekly.com

Save the imminently memorable closing image fade-out, Bob Dylan, or any direct representation of Bob Dylan, is, strictly speaking, nowhere to be found, nor ever mentioned, in Todd Haynes' new movie, a biopic—or is it perhaps an anti-biopic—about Bob Dylan.

Rather, we get a slyly assembled sextet of Dylanesques and Dylan-guises: Dylan as a riddle-smith Arthur Rimbaud (Ben Whishaw), Dylan as self-appointed resurrection of Woody Guthrie as a black little kid (Marcus Carl Franklin), Dylan as Jack Rollins, remote avatar of troubled social conscience who later finds God, weird make-up and polyester suits (Christian Bale), Dylan as an actor playing Jack Rollins in a mid-'60s biopic (Heath Ledger), Dylan as a drug-addled, gender-blending provocateur on tour in England (Cate Blanchett, in the role closest to a recognizable Dylan), Dylan as Billy the Kid in hiding after feigning death (Richard Gere). Among the countless conceptual marvels on display here

BIOPIC

OPENS FRI, FEB 8

I'M NOT THERE

DIRECTED BY TODD HAYNES

WRITTEN BY HAYNES, OREN MOVERMAN

STARRING CATE BLANCHETT, HEATH LEDGER, MARCUS CARL FRANKLIN, RICHARD GERE

★★★★

is the forming of a mosaic of personas that together embody our collective Dylan, with not a single one staking claims on any sort of definitive biographical portrait. *I'm Not There*, indeed

It sounds like a radical exercise in semiotics. It is. (Jean-Luc Godard looms over the film as much as Dylan.) But it's about the paradox of a popular artist's obligation to speak only for himself while also speaking for all of us, and the accompanying schisms this incites between his private and public life. Crucially, it's about the unavoidability of politics playing into personal expression. But can I ensure you that it's also wild and vibrant, often giddily entertaining and funny, and, at its very best, heart-breaking and unexpectedly cathartic.

It is also, like anything hoisted up with such vision and audacity, flawed—some parts just work better than others (the Gere segments are particularly gnomic and meandering)—yet to remove any individual parts would render it far more flawed. All this is to say *I'm Not There* ain't no *Ray* or *Walk the Line*. This isn't your Auntie Linda's biopic. But for God's sake, see it already. And take your Auntie Linda along with you. After all, it's about the 1960s.

DID I MENTION THE MUSIC? *I'm Not There* is not only bursting with it but guided by it. Dylan's songs, many of his very best, supply the rollicking soundtrack just as they inform the shape and tone and playfully baffling hairpin turns of the story. Just like *Chronicles Volume One*, Dylan's recent memoir, the film flows along with the restless, associational, merrily anachronistic funk of Dylan's verse. Thus each of Haynes' Dylans appear and reappear throughout, prompting one another, conspiring toward a strangely coherent narrative thread

that's not at all apparent while we're in the thick of it.

Early on, Franklin's Woody, at once a reincarnation and a throwback, is taken to task for singing folk songs tinged with nostalgia for the Depression instead of facing up to the problems of the day. Much later, Gere's Billy will see flashes of Vietnam in the rolling wooded hills he inhabits like some horseback Unabomber. In between, Blanchett assaults audiences with machine gun rock and fends off journalists with razor sharp witticisms, while, in what for me is the film's most compelling, beguiling and deeply moving section, Ledger copes with romance, marriage (to a marvelous Charlotte Gainsbourg) and family life while trying to maintain a role in the outside world that may just be coming to define himself. Along the way are concerts, cheeky commentaries (by Julianne Moore as Joan Baez!), cocktail parties and more than one ominous scene of fumbling with motorcycles.

"You never know how the past will turn out," says one of these Dylans, a

statement that encapsulates Haynes's stratagems. The caveat in the title of Pennebaker's classic Dylan doc implies a consequence: if you look back, what lies behind you will change and the path you're following will change with it. *I'm Not There* looks to and reconfigures the past as a way of discovering ecstatic truths about the culture we share as emblemized by this tremendous individual who means something a little different to everyone.

I wrote the above review several weeks ago, and the tragic news of Ledger's death in the interim prompted me to have another look before it went to press. Yet I find I want to change nothing. That Ledger's movingly underplayed performance here, my favourite in the film, is emblematic of the celebrity artist torn asunder by the pressures of fame and family speaks for itself. The difference is that now it seems to take on that much more painful a resonance. At least it serves as a suitable testament to the career of a great talent woefully cut short. **v**

Metro invites you to go to *Helvetica*

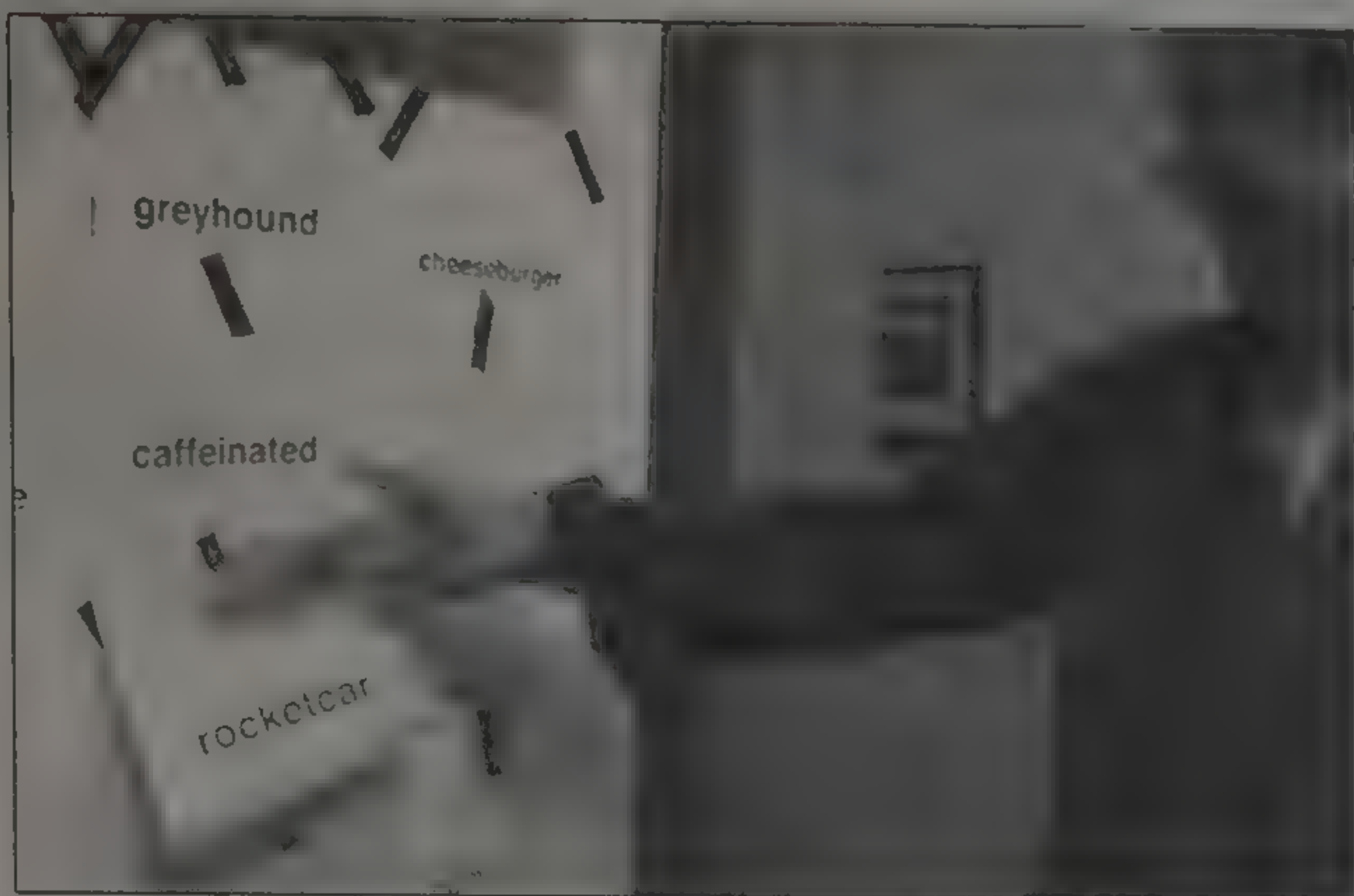
JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuwweekly.com

I think it would be fair to say that any documentary about a typeface should be approached with modest expectations in terms of the moviegoing thrills and intrigue it has to offer. Yet, that being said, you might just be surprised at the mileage that producer/director Gary Hustwit gets out of the subject matter with *Helvetica*, a feature-length doc that uses the world's most familiar font as a platform for discussing larger ideas of modern design and its implications for culture in general.

For those who never scroll down their font list before punching out some text, Helvetica is the one you'd recognize from ... well, everywhere, pretty much. Think New York City subway signage. Think NASA or Panasonic. Think of your tax forms. Think of any ad for American Apparel or American Airlines. Basically, think of the vast majority of corporate logos or of governmental institutions. The sans-serif typeface was developed at the Haas Foundry in Munchenstein, Switzerland in 1957 and quickly took over the world, still going strong as the dominant aesthetic in popular design and showing no signs of retiring 50 years after the fact.

Among the most persuasive arguments given in the film for adherence to Helvetica, or in any case to using only a small handful of the most tried and tested fonts, comes from Massimo Vignelli, the guy responsible for developing the brands for at least two of the examples of Helvetica-using companies listed above. He explains that a good typeface should be above all legible, that it should have no personality or message or meaning of its own in order to best facilitate the meaning of the actual content of the text. That it is a vessel, period.

Taking this championing of Helvetica further, there are some who wonder if there isn't some inherent "rightness" to Helvetica, something that naturally pleases the reader,



DOCUMENTARY


FRI, FEB 8 (8 PM; SOLO OUT)
SUN, FEB 10; MON, FEB 11 (7 & 9 PM)
HELVEITICA
PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY GARY HUSTWIT
FEATURING MASSIMO VIGNELLI, RICK POYNOR,
WIM CROUWEL, ALFRED HOFFMAN
METRO CINEMA, \$10

something we respond to on some ineffable, Pavlovian level. Yet Hustwit interviews many others in the design world who view Helvetica as tired, cliché or a sign of laziness that's meant only to exploit our desire for familiarity, like the golden arches or Timmy's. Another way to keep people from thinking and choosing.

WHAT'S MOST VITAL in all the arguments made in *Helvetica*, even for those whose interest in design is minimal, is how they prompt us to pay closer attention to how messages are conveyed in our daily lives. At its best, the film serves as a wake-up call of sorts, a way of developing your awareness to what are virtually subliminal elements in advertising and public semaphores, those little ways of training us to be good consumers. It would make a good primer for con-

spiracy theorists if someone could actually prove what one of Hustwit's subjects jokingly proposes, that Helvetica, apparently the font of choice of conservative America going way back, was somehow responsible for the Iraq War.

Perhaps appropriately for a film named after a typeface that many consider an avatar of conformity or classical elegance, or both, *Helvetica* presents us with a fairly sterile world, its imagery of public spaces largely square and clean and unsullied by everyday chaos, its score, by Kristian Dunn, steady and streamlined, like post-rock modified for the calming dictates of a phone commercial. One of the commentators nails it when he explains how being asked why you like Helvetica is like being asked why you like off-white paint. Having never given too much thought or, for that matter, enthusiasm over to off-white paint and its ostensible charms, I can appreciate the sentiment. But I'm also not sure how much I want to think about off-white paint ... I know that watching *Helvetica* made me not want to see more Helvetica for a long time, yet the only way to do this would probably be to stay in my bedroom, or go to a desert island. ▽



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TIME	THEATRE 1	THEATRE 2	THEATRE 3
10:00AM	Africa in Style	Ecuador & the Galapagos	Turkey
11:00AM	Volunteer Travel	Australia & New Zealand	Central Asia & Silk Road
12:00PM	Egypt & the Middle East	Italy & The Alps	Patagonia & Brazil
1:00PM	Nepal, Tibet & Bhutan	Polar Expeditions	West Africa
2:00PM	Peru & Inca Trail Trek	Trans-Mongolian Rail	East Europe & The Balkins
3:00PM	World of Wildlife	East Africa Camping	Diving Holidays
4:00PM	Egypt, Libya, Tunisia & Morocco	India	Colonial Cuba



SUNDAY SLIDESHOW SCHEDULE

TIME	THEATRE 1	THEATRE 2	THEATRE 3
10:00AM	South East Asia	Peru & Bolivia	France, Spain & Portugal
11:00AM	Africa in Style	Polar Expeditions	Central Asia & The Silk Road
12:00PM	Egypt & the Middle East	Australia & NZ Adventures	Climbing Kilimanjaro
1:00PM	Greece & Turkey	Trans-Mongolian Rail	South America Overland
2:00PM	Peru & Inca Trail Trek	Kenya, Tanzania & Uganda	Cycling in Asia & Africa
3:00PM	India	Southern Africa Camping	Cycling in Europe & the Americas
4:00PM	Central America	China & SE Asia	New 7 Wonders of the World

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THE DIVING BELL AND THE BUTTERFLY
NIGHTLY 6:50 PM
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RATED PG MATURE THEMES, RUDY

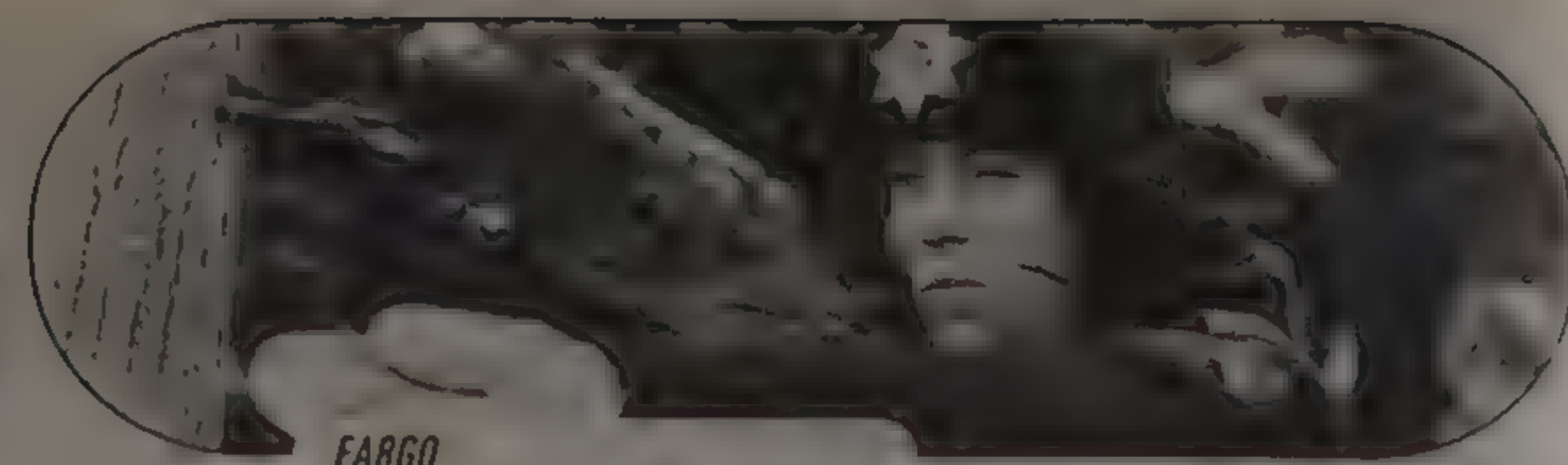
THERE WILL BE BLOOD
NIGHTLY 9:15 PM
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RATED R
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QUICK REVIEWS

FILM CAPSULES



THE EYE

OPENING THIS WEEK

COEN BROTHERS' RETROSPECTIVE
FEATURING BLOOD SIMPLE, FARGO
SUN, FEB 10 (2 PM); METRO CINEMA, \$10

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vancouverweekly.com
It opens with images of desolate Southern landscapes—derricks, roads, the rec-

tangular vacant expanse of a blank drive-in movie screen—while a disembodied, weary-sounding male voice speaks to us of man's darker potential. Save a few details, this description could be applied to the prelude to Joel and Ethan Coen's *No Country For Old Men*, yet I'm writing here of their feature debut, another study in blood, money, sweat and suspicion from nearly a quarter century ago. It's meant as no slight on the filmmakers when I draw attention to the terrain revisited in their finest films. On the contrary, it's a tribute to their singular approach that they're able to mine such fundamentally distinct visions from a similar perspective.

Though it closely follows Cormac McCarthy's source novel of the same name, *No Country For Old Men* has deep roots indeed not only in the Coens' *Blood Simple* (1984) but also in their Oscar-winner *Fargo* ('96), both of which are screening this weekend for Metro Cinema's second installment of Sunday afternoon Coen Brothers double-features. In the case of *Fargo*, there's an interesting corollary between the relatively endearing depiction of humble, small town law and order as embodied by the pregnant Officer Marge Gunderson (Frances McDormand) and her supportive husband Norm (John Carroll Lynch), and that same institution as embodied by *No Country's* Sheriff Ed Tom Bell (Tommy Lee Jones) and his wife Loretta (Tess Harper). In both cases, the corruption, menace and pathos that characterize the main storyline is all

the more pointed when set in relief by stolen moments with these gentler relationships.

Yet while drawing the lineage between these three films, it bears mention that gentleness is not something very present in *Blood Simple*, which is at heart one deliciously nasty little film. The set up is elegantly plain, almost archetypal: a wife (a very young McDormand) leaves her crazy husband (Dan Hedaya), gets help and much affection from husband's employee (John Getz), and is duly tracked down by husband's eccentric but effective PI (the inimitable M Emmet Walsh). Things get complicated, then confused, then downright macabre.

The camerawork and score feel like a more sombre approach to a slasher movie. An R&B-loving bartender puts the moves on a woman with lectures on volcanoes. Husband increasingly suffers indigestion. No single character knows everything about the actions of the others, and there's a steady escalation of guilt and paranoia, with everything turning on the characters' inability to trust each other. All in all, it's one of the finest neo-noirs ever made, a stellar debut, and, like *Fargo*, something you've got to check out if you haven't already, and very much worth revisiting if you have.

NOW PLAYING

THE EYE

DIRECTED BY DAVID MOREAU, XAVIER PALUD
WRITTEN BY SEBASTIAN GUTIERREZ
STARRING JESSICA ALBA, ALESSANDRO NIVOLA
★★

JONATHAN BUSCH / jonathan@vancouverweekly.com
Having moved past its peak with the respective sequels to *The Ring* and *The Grudge*, the trend of remaking Asian cult horror films in Hollywood leaves even the most liberally minded critics baffled to think about nothing other than cultural translation on celluloid. While it's painstakingly naive to ask why the originals are not merely redistributed on a wider scale, it's also difficult to not imagine a fat cat producer lighting a cigar with a handful of burning yen, especially in the wake of a screenwriters' strike.

The Eye, however, is bizarre enough of an imagining (like remakes *Mad Money* and TV's *Kingdom Hospital*) to stylistically hint to Western audiences that this was somebody else's idea first. An earnest

metro CINEMA FEBRUARY 7-11

A documentary film
by Gary Hustwit

Plexifilm

Helvetica

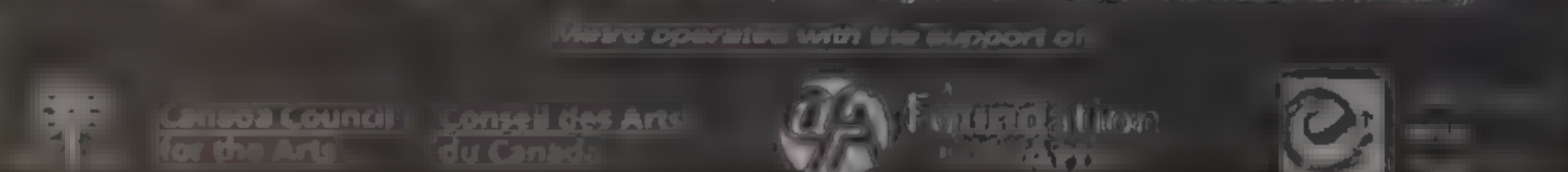
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Jessica Alba stars as blind superwoman Sydney Wells, who saves skateboarders from speeding traffic and plays a mean guitar. A day before she undergoes surgery for a new pair of working peepers from a confidential donor, she gets a little revenge.

Not only toughing out the adjustment to learning colors and depth of perception (or is it perception of depth?), Sydney starts to see, hear and feel the presence of bodies and places that aren't really there. It's a combo deal of dead kids, faceless phantoms and retro diners that burned down weeks ago. Instead of toughing out what may come with second-hand eyeballs, Sydney digs up, with the reluctant assistance of her sight doctor (Alessandro Nivola), the truth about what kind of fucked-up life her donor lived.

Stylistically, *The Eye* successfully borrows from the Pang Brothers' original the mimicry of bad vision through soft focus in pale, chilling interiors (with some frames matched almost identically). The creative ethics of such are debatable, but here's what doesn't work: Sydney falls in line with the newschool, IKEA-lifestyle heroine, who is endlessly witty, loves children and works flawless locks of brunette layers even in the most traumatic situations.

The reconfigured lead girls of hits *The Ring* and *The Grudge* were politely translated from their originals, maintaining their feminine insecurities, and hence, a more sophisticated portrayal of cultural hysteria. Besides, when there isn't much left to do than banter over which remake is best in show, it's time for the genre to pass the torch to a different continent.

THE SAVAGES

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY TAMARA JENKINS
STARRING LAURA LINNEY, PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN, JEFFREY BRIDGES

★★★★★

BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vnuweekly.com

Appropriately, for a film about a brother and sister's estranged father suffering from dementia, it's hard to recall a study of life's small struggles as bracing and true as Tamara Jenkins' *The Savages*. But there is a sense of strange familiarity.

The pathos of old age was also offered, though with far more open humour, by the film's executive producers, Jim Taylor (Jenkins' husband) and Alexander Payne, in their co-written, old-crank-on-the-road vehicle *About Schmidt*. Then there's the austere, sublime melancholia of graphic novelist Chris Ware, who crafted the film's poster. And the siblings are sly reversals of their namesakes, John and Wendy, from Peter Pan. *The Savages* are far from Darling children, just adults lost in Everydayland.

All these connections only go so far in explaining the ultimately unique, unwavering mood of *The Savages*, a film that's never a simple, sad look at coping with a senile, dying parent. Jenkins traces the faintest, most tremulous pulse of the smallest twists and turns of the day-to-day.

The almost crushingly banal look of life in heat-stroked Sun City or snow-bound Buffalo mirage and fog into the nearly surreal. It's an eerily short trip from cacti on lawns and golf carts on Arizona streets to a rusted-out northwestern city and a state-run rest-home where the

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

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ALL SHOWTIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME. PLEASE CONTACT THEATRE TO CONFIRM.

CHABA THEATRE-JASPER

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THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP (PG)
Fri-Sat 7:00; Sat-Sun 1:30

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET (18A, gory scenes)
Fri-Sat 9:00; Sun-Wed 8:00

FOOL'S GOLD (PG, violence)
Fri-Sat 7:00, 9:00; Sun-Thu 8:00; Sat-Sun 1:30

CINEMA AT THE CENTRE

Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, lower level, 7300 St. Albert Avenue, St. Albert, 836-1200

INERTIA (14A, coarse language)
Wed 8:30; free

CINEMA CITY MOVIES 12

12400 80th Street

ONE MISSED CALL (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:50, 7:25, 9:50; Sat 1:55, 4:50, 7:25, 9:50, 11:45

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM (18A, gory scenes)
Fri, Sun-Thu 2:00, 4:40, 7:35, 10:05; Sat 2:00, 4:40, 7:35, 10:05, 12:15

THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP (PG)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:30, 4:20, 6:50, 9:25; Sat 1:30, 4:20, 6:50, 9:25, 11:55

WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)
Fri, Sun-Thu 7:20, 9:35; Sat 7:20, 9:35, 11:50

CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR (14A, coarse language)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:25, 4:10, 7:05, 9:45; Sat 1:25, 4:10, 7:05, 9:45, 12:05

P.S. I LOVE YOU (PG, coarse language)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:20, 4:05, 6:55, 9:40; Sat 1:20, 4:05, 6:55, 9:40, 12:10

AWAKE (14A, coarse language, disturbing content)
Fri, Sun-Thu 4:55, 10:00; Sat 4:55, 10:00, 12:00

HITMAN (18A, gory scenes)
Fri, Sun-Thu 9:55; Sat 9:55, 12:15

MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM (G)
Daily 1:50, 4:45

BEOWULF (14A, violence)
Daily 1:40, 7:00

AMERICAN GANGSTER (18A)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:00, 4:15, 7:50; Sat 1:00, 4:15, 7:50, 11:05

BEE MOVIE (G)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:10, 3:10, 5:05, 7:15, 9:20; Sat 1:10, 3:10, 5:05, 7:15, 9:20, 11:20

INTO THE WILD (14A)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:15, 4:30, 7:40; Sat 1:15, 4:30, 7:40, 10:50

THE GAME PLAN (G)
Daily 1:35, 4:35, 7:10

THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES BY THE COWARD ROBERT FORD (14A)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:05, 4:25, 7:45; Sat 1:05, 4:25, 7:45, 11:00

CINEPLEX ODEON NORTH

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FOOL'S GOLD (PG, violence)
No passes Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu 1:00, 3:50, 7:05, 9:55; Tue 3:50, 7:05, 9:55; Star and Strollers Screening: No passes Tue 1:00

STRANGE WILDERNESS (18A, crude content, substance abuse)
Fri-Wed 2:30, 5:00, 8:00, 10:25

THE EYE (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri-Wed 2:00, 4:50, 7:45, 10:10; Thu 1:50, 4:40, 7:45, 10:15

OVER HER DEAD BODY (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Wed 1:20, 3:40, 6:50, 9:10

MEET THE SPARTANS (14A, crude content)
Fri-Wed 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45; Thu 2:10, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50

UNTRACEABLE (18A, gory scenes, disturbing content)
Fri-Wed 1:50, 4:30, 7:40, 10:15; Thu 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:00

RAMBO (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Daily 12:40, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:20

27 DRESSES (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Wed 1:30, 4:20, 7:20, 10:00; Thu 1:20, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

CLOVERFIELD (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri-Wed 2:10, 5:30, 8:10, 10:30; Thu 2:00, 5:30, 8:10, 10:25

THE BUCKET LIST (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Wed 12:20, 2:40, 5:10, 7:35, 10:05; Thu 12:50, 3:30, 6:40, 9:10

NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS (PG)
Fri-Mon, Wed 1:10, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50; Tue 1:10, 7:00, 9:50; Star and Strollers Screening: Tue 1:00

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS (G)
Fri-Wed 12:15

JUNO (14A, coarse language, mature themes)
Fri-Wed 1:40, 4:00, 7:15, 9:40; Thu 1:30, 4:10, 7:15, 9:45

ATONEMENT (14A, coarse language, mature themes)
Fri, Sun-Wed 12:50, 3:30, 6:30, 9:20; Sat 3:30, 6:30, 9:20

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN (18A, gory scenes)
Fri-Wed 12:30, 3:20, 6:40, 9:30; Thu 12:30,

3:40, 6:30, 9:20

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (PG, frightening scenes)
No passes Thu 12:10, 2:20, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

STEP UP 2 THE STREETS (PG)
No passes Thu 12:15, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10

JUMPER (PG, violence, coarse language)
No passes Thu 12:20, 2:30, 5:00, 8:00, 10:30

DEFINITELY, MAYBE (PG, not recommended for young children)
No passes Thu 1:10, 4:00, 6:50, 9:35

CINEPLEX ODEON SOUTH

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FOOL'S GOLD (PG, violence)
No passes Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00; Tue 4:10, 7:10, 10:00; Star and Strollers Screening: No passes Tue 1:00

WELCOME HOME ROSCOE JENKINS (14A)
Daily 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:15

STRANGE WILDERNESS (18A, crude content, substance abuse)
Fri-Wed 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30

THE EYE (14A, frightening scenes)
Daily 1:50, 4:50, 7:40, 10:20

OVER HER DEAD BODY (PG, coarse language)
Fri, Sun-Mon, Wed-Thu 12:20, 3:15, 6:40, 9:15; Sat, Tue 3:15, 6:40, 9:15; Star and Strollers Screening: Tue 1:00

MEET THE SPARTANS (14A, crude content)
Daily 1:20, 3:30, 6:40, 8:10, 10:40

UNTRACEABLE (18A, gory scenes, disturbing content)
Fri-Tue, Thu 12:45, 3:45, 6:45, 9:20; Wed 12:45, 3:45, 9:20

RAMBO (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Daily 2:40, 5:10, 8:15, 10:45

27 DRESSES (PG, coarse language)
Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:45

Cloverfield (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 2:00, 4:45, 7:50, 10:45

THERE WILL BE BLOOD (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)
Daily 12:40, 4:40, 8:30

THE BUCKET LIST (PG, coarse language)
Daily 1:15, 3:40, 6:30, 9:10

NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS (PG)
FRI-WED 12:50, 3:50, 7:15, 10:10

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS (G)
Daily 12:10

JUNO (14A, coarse language, mature themes)
Daily 1:30, 4:15, 6:50, 9:30

I AM LEGEND (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri-Sun 1:45, 4:20, 7:30, 10:15

ATONEMENT (14A, coarse language, mature themes)
Fri-Sun, Tue-Wed 12:15, 3:20, 6:30, 9:40; Mon 12:15, 3:20, 9:40

METROPOLITAN OPERA: MACBETH - ENCORE (Classification not available)
Sat 11:30 am

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (PG, frightening scenes)
No passes Thu 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 9:50

STEP UP 2 THE STREETS (PG)
No passes Thu 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15

JUMPER (PG, violence, coarse language)
No passes Thu 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30

DEFINITELY, MAYBE (PG, not recommended for young children)
No passes Thu 12:50, 3:50, 7:15, 10:10

CINEPLEX WEST MALL 8

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IN THE NAME OF THE KING: A DUNGEON SIEGE TALE (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)
Fri, Mon-Thu 9:10; Sat-Sun 3:20, 9:10

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM (18A, gory scenes)
Fri 4:45, 7:30, 9:45; Sat-Sun 12:30, 2:30, 4:45, 7:30, 9:45, Mon-Thu 7:30, 9:45

THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP (PG)
Fri 4:30, 7:00, 9:30; Sat-Sun 12:40, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30; Mon-Thu 7:00, 9:30

WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)
Fri 4:50, 7:10, 9:40; Sat-Sun 12:45, 2:50, 4:50, 7:10, 9:40, Mon-Thu 7:10, 9:40

BEOWULF (14A, violence)
Fri, Mon-Thu 6:45; Sat-Sun 1:00, 6:45

AMERICAN GANGSTER (18A)
Fri-Sun 5:10, 8:30; Mon-Thu 8:30

BEE MOVIE (G)
Fri 5:00, 7:15, 9:20; Sat-Sun 12:35, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:20; Mon-Thu 7:15, 9:20

INTO THE WILD (14A)
Fri 4:40, 8:45; Sat-Sun 12:50, 4:40, 8:45, Mon-Thu 8:45

THE GAME PLAN (G)
Fri, Mon-Thu 6:50, 9:15; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:45, 6:50, 9:15

CHRISTMAS IN WONDERLAND (PG)
Sat-Sun 12:55, 3:10

CITY CENTRE 9

10200-102 Ave, 421-7020

RAMBO (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:00, 3:25, 7:10, 9:40

FOOL'S GOLD (PG, violence)
Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 12:40, 3:30, 7:00, 9:50

27 DRESSES (PG, coarse language)
Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 12:50, 3:40, 6:50,

9:40

CLOVERFIELD (14A, frightening scenes)
DTS Digital Fri-Wed 12:30, 2:45, 4:40, 7:30, 10:40

THE EYE (14A, frightening scenes)
DTS Digital Fri-Wed 1:20, 4:00, 7:20, 10:00, Thu 1:20, 4:00, 10:00

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (PG, frightening scenes)
DTS Digital Thu 1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:55

JUMPER (PG, violence, coarse language)
Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 12:30, 2:40, 5:00, 7:10, 9:45

DEFINITELY, MAYBE (PG, not recommended for young children)
DTS Digital Thu 1:30, 4:10, 6:45, 9:20

STEP UP 2 THE STREETS (PG)
DTS Digital Thu 1:40, 4:20, 7:30, 10:00

THE BUCKET LIST (PG, coarse language)
DTS Digital Fri-Thu 1:10, 3:50, 6:40, 9:00

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET (18A, gory scenes)
DTS Digital Fri-Wed 9:15

MICHAEL CLAYTON (14A)
DTS Digital Fri-Tue 12:35, 3:15, 6:30, 9:10; Wed 12:35, 3:15

MEET THE SPARTANS (14A, crude content)
DTS Digital Fri-Wed 1:40, 4:10, 7:15

UNTRACEABLE (18A, gory scenes, disturbing content)
DTS Digital Fri-Wed 1:30, 4:20, 6:45, 9:20

CLAREVIEW 10

10710 49th Avenue, 461-1000

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS (G)
Fri-Sun 12:50, 4:20; Mon-Wed 4:20

THE BUCKET LIST (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Sun 1:40, 4:40, 7:15, 9:35; Mon-Wed 4:40, 7:15, 9:35; Thu 1:40, 4:40, 7:15

JUNO (14A, coarse language, mature themes)
Fri-Sun 1:30, 4:05, 6:30, 9:10; Mon-Wed 4:05, 6:30, 9:10; Thu 1:30, 4:05, 6:30

27 DRESSES (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Sun, Thu 1:10, 4:15, 6:50, 9:20; Mon-Wed 4:15, 6:50, 9:20

CLOVERFIELD (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri-Sun 12:40, 2:40, 5:00, 7:25, 9:40; Mon-Wed 5:00, 7:25, 9:40

OVER HER DEAD BODY (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Wed 7:40, 9:55

THE EYE (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri-Sun, Thu 1:00, 4:35, 7:30, 9:50; Mon-Wed 4:35, 7:30, 9:50

STRANGE WILDERNESS (18A, crude content, substance abuse)
Fri-Sun 12:35, 2:45, 4:50, 7:00, 10:00; Mon-Wed 4:50, 7:00, 10:00; Thu 7:00

MEET THE SPARTANS (14A, crude content)
Fri-Sun 12:30, 2:35, 4:45, 7:10, 9:15; Mon-Wed 4:45, 7:10, 9:15; Thu 7:00

FOOL'S GOLD (PG, violence)
Fri-Sun, Thu 1:20, 4:00, 6:45, 9:30; Mon-Wed 4:00, 6:45, 9:30

DEFINITELY, MAYBE (PG, not recommended for young children)
Thu 1:15, 4:25, 7:00, 9:40

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (PG, frightening scenes)
Thu 1:45, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10

STEP UP 2 THE STREETS (PG)
Thu 2:00, 4:20, 7:10, 9:35

JUMPER (PG, violence, coarse language)
Thu 2:10, 5:00, 7:35, 9:55

RAMBO (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri-Sun, Thu 1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:45; Mon-Wed 4:30, 7:20, 9:45

GALAXY-SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 416-0150

FOOL'S GOLD (PG, violence)
No passes Fri 3:30, 7:00, 9:50; Sat-Sun 12:30, 3:30, 7:00, 9:50; Mon-Thu 7:00, 9:50

THE EYE (14A, frightening scenes)
Fri 4:30, 7:15, 10:20; Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:20, 7:30, 10:20; Mon-Thu 7:30, 10:20

MEET THE SPARTANS (14A, crude content)
Fri 5:00, 7:20, 9:30; Sat-Sun 12:20, 2:30, 5:00, 7:20, 9:30; Mon-Thu 7:20, 9:30

UNTRACEABLE (18A, gory scenes, disturbing content)
Fri 4:00, 7:10, 9:45; Sat-Sun 1:10, 4:00, 7:10, 9:45, Mon-Wed 7:10, 9:45

RAMBO (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri 4:40, 7:40, 10:00; Sat-Sun 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:40, 10:00; Mon-Wed 7:40, 10:00

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN (18A, gory scenes)
Fri 3:40, 6:50, 9:40, Sat-Sun 12:50

FILM CAPSULES

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

aged are curtained off for privacy. Everyone here is vacuum-packed, sealed tight from each other and even some important sense of themselves. (In one scene in a film that's also quite perceptive about race in the US, brother and sister are so awkwardly self-absorbed that they let their dad show a film with a blackface scene at the rest home, never thinking about the supervising black workers.) But there are no grand moments of connection or understanding here, and it would take a hardcore cynic to find any sentimentality.

The musical score, lightest touches of comedy, and remarkable acting lift the film high above any miserable mood or conventional drama. The film's tone never strays from better-to-laugh-than-cry, as when Jon and Wendy's father, asked what his funeral wishes are (an answer the rest-home needs to know for its records), responds bewilderingly, "What sort of hotel is this?" (This portrait of senility is more immediate and honest than Sarah Polley's adaptation of Munro's story in *Away From Her*, so grandly, obviously literary by comparison.)

All the characters are neurotic in remarkably complex ways. Philip Bosco plays Lawrence as a man fading away, his moods ever-changing. But it's mostly Wendy's story, and Laura Linney is



THE SAVAGES

Madison production that follows the same formula as its siblings: underdog losers (headed by one bad-tempered protagonist) pinned against overdone villains (headed by one smarmy antagonist), always in a "last chance" scenario, always a sexy love interest, always gag-driven and, depending on whether Adam Sandler is in it or not, always speckled with boobs.

As trite, sloppy, and unfunny as they may be, Happy Madison is doing something right, because it's one of the most successful comedy production companies in Hollywood. Even *Grandma's Boy*, which spent 25 of the last 30 minutes

And before you can roll your eyes at the obvious foreshadowing, Peter gets a Bigfoot tip. So off the go on a cryptozoological hunt, only to get sidetracked by non-stop gags posing as obstacles.

Co-writer Peter Gaulke was right to name the main character after himself, because they're both pretty much idiots. While Peter the character repeatedly bungles his show with shoddy hosting, Peter the screenwriter bungles the movie with shoddy writing, aimlessly setting up barriers, only to knock them down immediately and build a new wall, without actually finding a solution to the former.

But despite it being a bad movie, *Strange Wilderness* knows its audience and caters to them well. If you doubt that, then go to a playing and count the laughs. Better yet, save your \$12.50, download an illegal bootleg, and count the laughs emitted from that theatre. It shouldn't matter how shaky and blurry the bootleg is; it was probably filmed with as much care as the movie it's pirating. ▼

ALSO OPENING THIS WEEK

FOOL'S GOLD Matthew McConaughey and Kate Hudson sexily search for treasure. Read *Vue Weekly's* review next week.

HELVETICA A deep look into the world's most popular font, celebrating its 50th birthday this year. Read Josef Braun's review on page 49.

I'M NOT THERE Todd Haynes examines the life of Bob Dylan through the lives of six people who aren't, strictly speaking, Bob Dylan. Read Josef Braun's review on page 49.

INERTIA Sean Garrity won the Best Canadian Debut award at TIFF for this film, about the sexual politics of life in Winnipeg, showing as part of the Library's Cinema at the Centre series. STANLEY MILNER LIBRARY; WED, FEB 13 (6:30 PM)

PEYTON PLACE The Edmonton Film Society's "Guilty Pleasures" winter program continues with Mark Robson's New England melodrama. ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM; MON, FEB 11 (8 PM)

WELCOME HOME, ROSCOE JENKINS Martin Lawrence returns home to his wacky Southern family. Read *Vue Weekly's* review next week.



STRANGE WILDERNESS

superb as a middle-aged temp, struggling to be a playwright and trying to satisfy herself with brief self-delusions and an affair that's more about avoidance than intimacy. Hoffman, familiar as a bookish schlub, fills out Jon into a struggling academic whose efforts at distancing himself from others aren't merely man-childish

And *The Savages* isn't just about coping, or death, but most of all about recovering, about picking yourself up, dusting yourself off, and plugging on. It also just happens to be, in its small, astutely observed, delicately bittersweet way, one of the best films of the year

STRANGE WILDERNESS

DIRECTED BY PETER WOLF

WRITTEN BY PETER GAULKE, WOLF

STARRING STEVE ZAHN, JONAH HILL, JUSTIN LONG

OMAR MOUALLEM / omar@vueweekly.com

Strange Wilderness is another Happy

Two underappreciated films from two masters

FLICKS

DVDETECTIVE

JOSEF BRAUN

dvddetective@vueweekly.com

Before we witness lulling images of a circus caravan wobbling under a dim, rainy Scandinavian sky, before we're privy to the ongoing love affair between the plump circus owner and his beguiling horseback-riding mistress, before we're drawn into the rotunda of humiliations and grappling with the impossibility of love, the fanciful opening titles of Ingmar Bergman's *Sawdust and Tinsel* describe what proceeds as "a broadside ballad on film." It brings into question the true nature of what we call broad entertainment, what tumultuous personas prop it up, and why, perhaps above all, we're attracted to their grotesque faces, gaudy spectacle and hysterical laughter. In escapism there is always the shadow of whatever it is we're trying to escape.

Released in 1953, *Sawdust and Tinsel*, written and directed by a young filmmaker still struggling for respect in his native Sweden and waiting for that crucial applause from abroad, drifts through the floating world of nomadic entertainers to observe their own particular brand of ordinary madness. The first event is a flashback set on a beach pebbled with soldiers, the image overexposed to evoke the blasted-out feeling of a painful memory. It features an elder member of the circus, the striking but already middle-aged Alma, swimming naked for the amusement of the grunts. Her husband, a gawky clown, comes to remove her from this salacious audience but, when he returns from the sea with his naked spouse cradled awkwardly in his skinny arms, their clothes have been hidden, and he must stumble along the rocky shore to a chorus of laughter.

The scene introduces only minor characters, but announces the major theme: the shame that befalls couples seeking the attention and desires of outsiders yet unable to part from each other. Albert (Åke Grönberg) and Anne (the delectable Harriet Andersson), both want to run away from the circus, not to mention each other. Having arrived in the town where his abandoned wife and kids reside, Albert will be compelled to return to them and embrace domestic bliss, while Anne will retaliate by courting the local theatre and submitting to the sexual proposition of its lead actor. Yet they cannot escape the circus ring, where marriage must play itself out for better or for worse. Theirs is a poetic, resonant dance of love and its inherent unease, set to seductive images, particularly of mirrors and faces, which Bergman would here begin to close in on with increasingly obsessive focus.

Criterion's DVD of *Sawdust and Tinsel* is a significant release for enthusiasts whose knowledge of the late master's work doesn't predate *Smiles on a Summer Night* or *The Seventh Seal*. Here, we see an auteur finding his mature voice, not to mention the cinematographer who would come to be his greatest stylistic collaborator, Sven

Nykqvist. The disc features an excellent commentary from Peter Cowie, a short intro from Bergman, and essays from John Simon and Catherine Breillat.

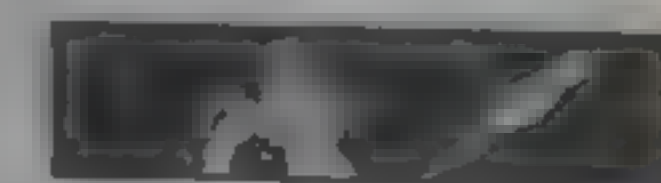
ANOTHER FORGOTTEN WORK by one of the great auteurs bearing roughly the same vintage is Akira Kurosawa's 1955 troubled social portrait *I Live in Fear*, now available in Eclipse's Postwar Kurosawa box. As is often the case with Kurosawa, the film has been grossly underrated over the years on account of its didacticism—as though earnestness alone can kill a movie with otherwise compelling, dynamic, chilling and even touching qualities. I propose that *I Live in Fear* is actually something quite special, rich in atmosphere and in certain regards as revealing of the period as, say, Nicholas Ray's *Bigger Than Life* or *Rebel Without a Cause*, films that also feature familial disintegration in a milieu of modernity and progress, as well as Cold War apocalyptic paranoia.

Elderly patriarch Kiichi Nakajima, portrayed by a heavily made-up yet surprisingly effective Toshiro Mifune, is so consumed with anxiety over the seemingly inevitable nuclear holocaust that he's resolved to move his entire clan—mistresses and illegitimate kids included—to a farm in Brazil, which he considers to be the safest possible locale to avoid fallout or direct attack. More concerned with the destiny of Kiichi's finances than with the mortal destiny of Japan, the majority of his kin attempt to have a local court deem Kiichi incompetent and thus unfit to invest the family's collective wealth in this venture that almost none want part of. As it becomes uncomfortably obvious that those pursuing the claim are chiefly concerned with their inheritance, the explosive Kiichi, whose convictions are as well-intentioned as they are impractical, wins the sympathies of one of his jurors, a dentist portrayed by Takashi Shimura, once again playing the reasonable counterpart to Mifune's unruly protagonist.

(The more I watch Shimura in these roles, the more he comes to resemble a Japanese Morgan Freeman. He's got that aura of wisdom and kindness, yet can readily possess a daunting edge.)

Though sections are admittedly excessively talky, there are numerous scenes in *I Live in Fear* that, in their blend of sinuous camerawork, striking composition and percolating tension, deserve alignment with Kurosawa's finest moments. In one, hot wind blows the pages of a book, while streetcars boom along the avenue outside; this "spooky weather," attributed to H-bomb testing at sea, creates an unnerving air around Kiichi as he cradles an infant grandchild while a son-in-law, drink in hand, casually goes on about the effects of radiation and the latest research into the ongoing trauma in Hiroshima.

The transfer on Eclipse's no-frills disc is very good, and I'm grateful to finally have the film available on DVD. My only regret is that Criterion didn't hold out for a more prestige-packaged release, because Japanese cinema expert Donald Ritchie would likely have provided a stellar commentary track. ▼



From the faraway melodies *In Field & Town* and beyond DESPITE HIS CREATIVE SOLITUDE, HAYDEN WANTS HIS SONGS TO BE HEARD

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com

"I'd be happy letting my records be my little statements to the world," Paul Hayden Dresser says quietly, before adding with a short, raspy chuckle, "I'd be happy letting my records be my little world."

"That's why I don't fancy myself a good interview—it's not what I like, talking about things. This record I laboured over, put out, edited, obsessed over what's in it ... I'd be fine if that's all I said in public."

Hayden has spent more than a decade making music under the aegis of his middle name, which seems an illustrative decision somehow, as simultaneously intimate and opaque as his records. Over the course of four full-length releases and a number of smaller recording projects, the Toronto-based songwriter has repeatedly invited us into his private aural landscapes, lovingly pieced together from scraps of meaning and recollection during long afternoons and nights, melodies and words nurtured into the full bloom of song through intensive bouts of creation.

As 2008 dawned, after an absence of nearly four years, Hayden emerged from another of his wildernesses and held out his fifth record, *In Field & Town*. More explicitly than 2001's *Sky-scraper National Park* or 2004's *Elk Lake Serenade*, it evokes the distance and points of crossover between the interior and exterior worlds, the man-made and organic, the intentional and the accidental.

There are long, green carpets of piano and guitar, and hyperactive streets of bass and drums, revelatory dapples of brassy trumpet and tugging swells of lap steel, a collision between the abstracted bustle of the city and a folding inward induced by the natural world breathing in between the concrete. It's a beautiful gem of shaggy pop, unexpected and inspired, textured and well woven, with a broader and more ornate palette of sounds used in a more restrained way than in previous releases.

"I've not been able to break out of the early mold, from when I started recording and in some ways wrote with a four-track and old cassette deck," Hayden notes. "I started that way, sitting at the table or on the floor, moving things around myself. I've never gotten out of that mold. To some extent, the process of making records has stayed the same the whole time."

HAYDEN'S CREATING appears to be a cyclical and immersive affair. There's a period that's just about living, a full



engagement with the world, carrying on with everyday threads and dramas. Ideas germinate, propagating until he can't ignore their call, launching the noodling—a hand wandering over the piano keys or guitar strings, a flutter of words anchored to notes. He builds the vistas of song layer-by-layer, smudging on sound and scraping it back until he's satisfied enough with the composition to polish it more for-

mally in the studio, in which he uses the same process, writ larger and etched bolder, until completion.

"The last two or three albums, I write songs as I set up to record them, with the ideas fresh," Hayden explains. "I work away while it's fresh, until I know there's enough there for a song, or I shelve it. Until I have an idea how to finish it or I write a new song and get distracted by that and

put the rest aside—to hell with those!"

He laughs.

"At this particular stage of life, the hard stuff is admitting it's finished," he continues. "Coming up with ideas is a blast—singing a melody for the first time with the realization the Beatles and the Beach Boys haven't taken it yet, or that I've rewritten something I already wrote. I did that on this album, once, I think."

PREVIEW

SAT, FEB 9 (7 PM)

HAYDEN

WITH JENN GRANT

MCDUGALL UNITED CHURCH, \$24

He'll admit to being ruthless in pursuit of his aural vision, even if it's a "search and create" mission rather than some well-mapped out execution of intention.

"It's a total luxury, being able to work when you're actually doing what you're feeling," he sighs. It's particularly nice in the early stages with the seeds of the songs. It gets more intensive in the second half, in the studio, crawling along slowly. I'm always going off the tracks and wanting to try something different. But I'm pretty good at making the tough calls—I'm surprisingly good at forgetting all of that hard work went into something if it doesn't do what I want it to do. I'll peel off the pedal steel trumpet, strings—these major things going into the work—just pare it back down to piano and vocal and not really think about it if that's what I think needs to happen.

"And to be honest, I'm kind of ... I'm happy I can do that myself," he continues. "There are definitely moments where it would be really great having some hired person to tell me if something works, but in the end I figure it out, even if it takes me sometimes a long time. I have people close to me who help me and won't lie, so that's good."

What happens to the orphaned melodies and other ideas that don't make it into song?

"I feed them to my cat!" Hayden replies.

THE ARTIST DEPLOYS his wry, absurdist sense of humour more liberally in conversation than in song—it's present in his lyrical wordplay, but in a much more nuanced and disciplined way. In phrase-to-phrase combat, it serves more as shield than weapon, a polite way of changing the subject or deflecting an uncomfortable line of inquiry. Hayden also uses it frequently as a tourniquet to staunch his almost reflexive honesty.

I try not to stay in any particular stage of working too long, and I've learned to work within the industry in my own little way, he sighs. One way I do that is to completely shut down the miniature machine that's me on the road, doing interviews, being the almost semi-public person at the promotion of the record. I completely shut

CHRISTOPHER WOOD

CR AVERY
10111-117 ST, S5

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Vancouver's CR Avery—a spoken word artist and musician—released his first record, *Magic Hour Sailor Songs*, in 2007. He did something interesting with the CD booklet: instead of filling it up with the album's lyrics, he took a stage of the space and collected poems from the pages a number of short poems that he had written, creating a miniature poetry book as a companion piece to the album. While some might wonder why he would turn the focus away from the lyrics, for Avery it was an easy choice founded in a desire to both push beyond his comfort zone and to save some of those shorter poems from being forgotten.

"Lyrics look like shit on paper," he says over a cell phone from the Edmonton

International Airport, where he's trying to find the piano he brought to town with him. "They really do—even the best of them—and all the poems that are that shape and size don't get spoken. They just get lost. I tried to save a few of them. Songs get lost a lot, but at least when you record them they get documented that way. And so this was a way to make sure that the little poems don't just get thrown by the wayside. And it was a fun thing to do to go through all the scraps and try to turn them into something."

For Avery, poetry is not just something that he's dabbling in at this point. He's throwing himself full-force into creating, with the intent to release an actual poetry book sometime this year.

"That's what I'm working on right now, because I really like the process," he says, explaining his current interest in the form. "I travel a lot and it's just a great way to get out of the bar at the end of the night and work on a poem. It's a nice absorption. And it makes me look at the world in a better way."

"When you're caught up in a poem it's almost like being on drugs where the simplest things can seem really interesting because you're looking at finer detail," he continues. "You're almost looking at it like a six-year-old or something."

While Avery is quick to admit that there are certainly differences between poetry and music, he doesn't like the idea of drawing dividing lines between the two forms—or between others, like acting, for that matter.

"Even Cher acting, or Billy Bob Thornton singing—I think it's just people who are into arts are all ADD kids or something," he laughs. "It's like, I can't do simple things like fill out taxes or register to vote. The simplest tasks are a pain in the ass to me, but the creative side comes natural. I try to fill out a form and I end up writing some weird thing that some people would call a poem. Then you say it aloud and it's a song... I think it's all just the dance of the misfit." ▽

(pop/rock), 8:30pm

TREEHOUSE Sketchy Saturdays
Sons of York, Corvid Lorax and DJ
Gennie Grey, 8:30pm (door), 9:30pm
(show): \$10

URBAN LOUNGE

ROCK BOTTOM 10111-117 ST, S5

PALACE Singers and Ringers
Charity Concert, Gord Banford, Tera
Lee, Shane Yellowbird, Tracy Miller,
Jessie Farrell, Deric Rutten, Melanie
Morgan, Jo Hikk, Jason Blaine,
Duane Steele, Lisa Hewitt, Charlie
Major, Samantha King, noon, free

WILD WEST Kory Wlos

WHISKEY STUBS

YARDBIRD SUITE Fieldtrip, 8pm
(door), 9pm (show), \$12 (mem-
ber)/\$16 (guest)

CLASSICAL

ARDEN THEATRE Cantlon Choirs:
To Broadway with Love, 7:30pm, \$25
(adult)/\$12 (student) at TIX on the
Square

JULIAN'S Petro Polujin (classical
guitar), 8pm

WINSPEAR CENTRE Edmonton
Symphony Orchestra: Robbins
Pops—Big Band Celebration: Erich
Kunzel (conductor), Jeff Berger
(vocalist), Steven Bailey and
Nathane Gomes (dancers), 8pm,
\$42-\$73, student/senior \$15 rush
tickets two hours prior to curtain
time at Winspear box office

DJS

BACKROOM VODKA BAR

Saturdays: Top 40 with DJ
Soundwave

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE DJs on
two levels alt rock/electro/trash;
Main Floor: The Menace Sessions
alt, rock, electro, trash with Miss
Mannered; cancelled this week

BUDDY'S Indie night for men only,
free pool and tourney, DJ
Arrowchaser

DELUXE BURGER BAR Rare '60s
and '70s progressive rock, disco, and
electronic indie with Joel Reboh

EMPIRE BALLROOM Rock, hip
hop, house, mash up

FLUID LOUNGE Saturdays Gone
Gold Mash-Up: with Harmen B and
DJ Kwake

FUNKY BUDDHA (WHYTE AVE)
Top tracks, rock, retro with DJ
Damian

GINGUR SKY Soulout Saturdays

HALO For Those Who Know: house
every Sat with Blair Junior
McFarlane with Sal Dimario and
Jason Thompson

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Sizzle Saturday
DJ Groovy Cury and guests

NEW CITY LIVING Saturdays
Saturdays real alternative, classics,
punk with DJ Nazz Nomad, no cover

NEW CITY SUBURBS Saturday
Sucks: electro, industrial, alt and
indie, electro, rock with DJs Greg
Gory and Blue Jay, \$5

PLANET INDIGO-JASPER

AVENUE Suggestive Saturdays:
breaks electro house with PI resi-
dents

RED STAR Saturdays indie rock, hip
hop, and electro with DJ Hot Philly
and guests

RENDEZVOUS Survival metal night

SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO Sportsworld Inline and
Roller Skating Disco: Top 40 request
with a mix of retro and disco; 1-5pm
and 7pm-12 midnight

STOLLI'S ON WHYTE Top 40, R&B,
house with People's DJ

TEMPLE Oh Snap! Electrified
Dubwise dancerock booty bass
mashed-up party riddims every
Saturday with DJs: Degree, All Out
DJs, Cobra Commander; 9pm (door)

VELVET UNDERGROUND Techno
Night In Canada: Dave Stone, Neil
K, Tryptomene; no minors; 9pm; \$10
(door)

WUNDERBAR Featured DJ and
local bands

Y AFTERHOURS Release
Saturdays: Marc Vedo

**SUN
LIVE MUSIC**

COAST TERRACE INN *Cupid's
Capers*: Tropicadero Alumni Orchestra,
2-5pm; \$23 each at TIX on the
Square

EDMONTON AND AVE 10111-117 ST, S5
Sunday jam; 7pm

DUSTER'S PUB Sunday open stage
hosted by the Mary Thomas Band

EDDIE SHORTS Every Sunday open
stage with Rob Taylor; 4-8pm

EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE
Thrice, Say Anything, Attack in
Black; 6pm

FESTIVAL PLACE Black Umfolosi
(world); 7-30pm; \$32 (cabaret)/\$30
(box)/\$28 (theatre) at Festival Place
box office, TicketMaster

HULBERT'S PUB Sunday Night mic
hosted by Rhea March; 7pm

JAMMERS PUB Sunday open
blues jam; 4-8pm

NEWCASTLE PUB Live Sunday jam
hosted by Wily and Dave; 2:30pm

O'BYRNE'S Sunday night open
stage with Joe Bird

ON THE ROCKS Souljah Fyah (CD
release party) with Scott Cook and
the Long Weekends

OSCAR'S PUB Open stage Sundays
hosted by Chris Wynters of Captain
Tractor; 8-11pm

OVERDRIVE Anything Goes
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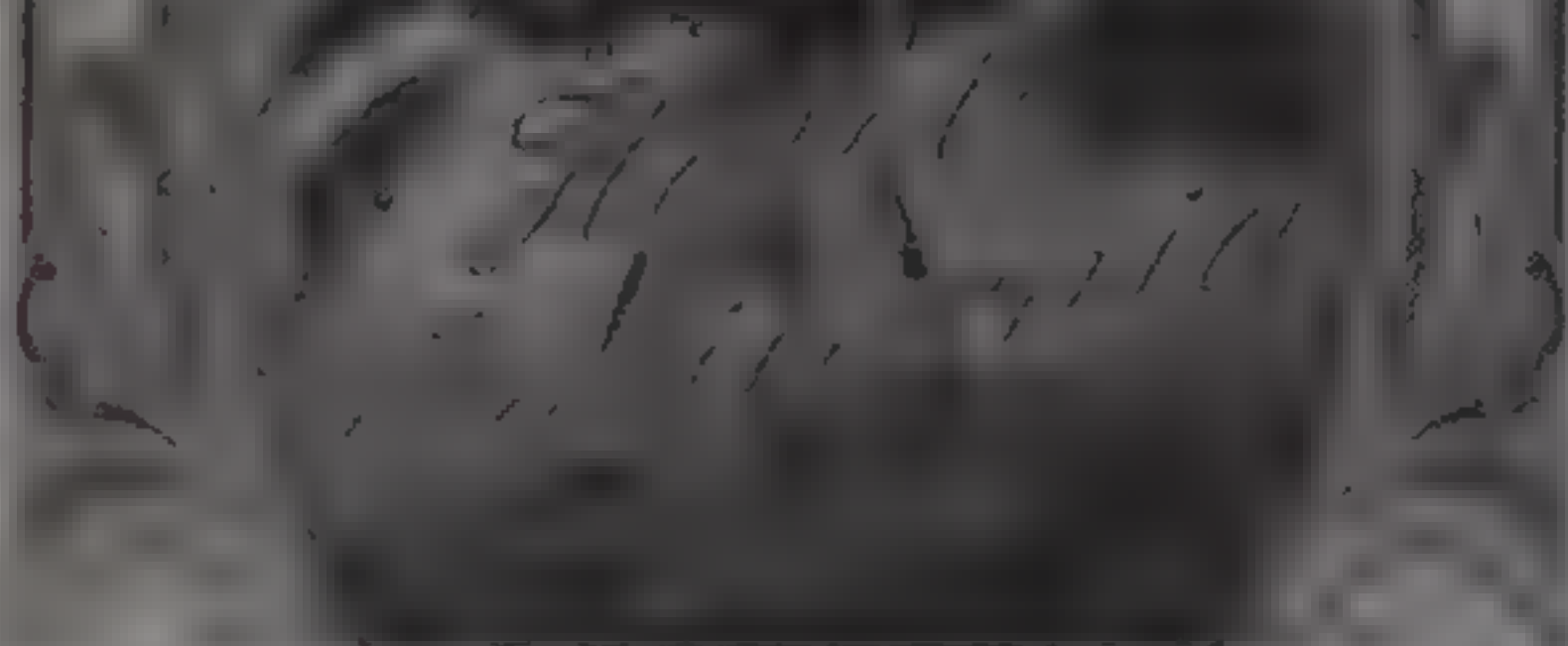
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Rock Band is the future

MUSIC BACKLASH BLUES

ROLAND PUMBERTON
roland@vancouverweekly.com

I am fascinated by the concept of the future. Not our tame, foreseeable, realistic "future," but the *Jetsons*-style, eating meal pills in your flying car, hypothetical future. So while I'm disenchanted that we still use non-renewable fuel sources and engage in territorial conflict, I do like the fact that my entire music collection is contained inside a 4 by 2 inch rectangle and I especially like that music simulators have efficiently brought interactive gaming into the home and the mainstream.

The idea of having a physical representation of on-screen gameplay goes back as far as the pong paddle and Nintendo's Zapper for *Duck Hunt*, but in the '90s it had found a safe home in the greasy hands of the lost children known as arcade gamers. The allure of the arcade was the promise

of a more tactile gaming experience, involving big plastic guns, motion-sensor punching bags and arrows you can dance on. This advantage is no longer present in the console-arcade battle.

Music gaming in the home is interesting to gamers of all levels, from hardcore to casual to the typically disinterested. The last game to attract this many different types of people was *Tetris*. From *Guitar Hero* springs *Rock Band*, a game somehow even more appealing to the average person. My mom recently bought the entire pack and we generated our own family band for a couple loud hours. I got acquainted with the mic and found it to be the most original aspect of the game. Basically, it monitors loudness, timing and pitch on a specific line that you can follow at the top of the screen. This is probably the first accurate monitor for karaoke success so, for that alone, *Rock Band* is a revelation.

THE GAME SOMEHOW distills three vastly different instruments and makes them

work together with minimal error. That has been the problem with a lot of motion-capturing control schemes. I felt like the *Wii Sports* boxing game didn't accurately monitor my incredible punching ability, while the mic, guitar and drum combo is right 96% of the time. Even more genius, *Rock Band* presents a weekly song dispersal plan through Xbox 360's online marketplace. Here's to hoping for the Rapture/!!! Millennium Disco Punk Power Pack.

Rock Band makes me wonder about other futuristic applications for music video games. They already have *Guitar Hero* karaoke nights, but how cool would a battle of the bands between accomplished *Rock Band* squads at a bar be? Randomized song selection, money on the line, let's go! Or imagine expanding song selection by allowing the user to take any song off his computer and dump it onto the gaming system for analysis and subsequent instant game mapping. Music will always be involved in entertainment, whether it's played in front of you, played by you or "played" by you and your friends. ▽

URBAN LOUNGE Sunday Night Live hosted by DA Choclit Elvz, DJ Sweetz 9pm, the best of Urban's live entertainment 10pm

WUNDERBAR Sundays DJ Gallatea and XS, guests, no cover

MON LIVE MUSIC

IVORY CLUB Open mic Mondays music and comedy, 8pm

LB'S PUB Open Stage with Shaved Posse hosted by Ken, Fred, Gordie and Matt, 9-12:30

NEW CITY The ElitXXers, Triple Exposure (punk/ska), 8:30pm (door)

PLEASANTVIEW COMMUNITY HALL Acoustic instrumental old time fiddle jam hosted by the Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers Society, 7pm

ROSEBOWL Monday jam/open stage hosted by Sherry-Lee Wilson and Mike McDonald alternate weeks, 8:30pm

DJS

BAR WORLD Open House Mondays: Service Industry Night; no minors, 9pm-2am

BLUES BOYS FREEHOUSE Floor: Eclectic Nonsense with Confederacy of Dunces, Dad Rock, T.J. Hookah and Rear Admiral Saunders; cancelled this week

BUDDY'S ROSEBOWL House: Electro Latest and greatest in House, Progressive and Trip-Hop, 12am-2:30am; interested guest DJs inquire at kelly@michetti.com, karaoke with Tizzy, amateur strip contest, 9pm-12am

ROCKY MOUNTAIN MUD Mondays with DJ S.W.A.G

FLUID LOUNGE Mondays Mixer

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE

Munch on Metal Mondays: '80s metal with DJ Sammi Kerr; no minors, no cover

TUE LIVE MUSIC

TRINITY JASPER AVENUE stage with Chris Wynters

LEGENDS PUB Tuesday open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

O'BYRNE'S Tuesday night Celtic jam with Shannon Johnson

STAGITE ROCK Delta Spirit

TAPHOUSE Tuesday Moosehead Jam, 8:30pm-1am

WINDMILL SALUTE Dave Babcock, 8:30pm (door), 9pm (show); every Tue; \$3

DJS

BUDDY'S Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser, 9pm

ESMERALDA'S Top 40, country, R&B with DJ Foreplay, DJ Jimmy

FUNKY BUDDHA (Whyte Ave) Latin and Salsa music, dance lessons 8-10pm

GINGUR SKY Bashment Tuesdays Reggae music with Bomb Squad, Q.B., Chrome Nine; no cover

RED STAR Tuesdays Experimental Indie Rock, Hip Hop, Electro with DJ Hot Philly

SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE Tapas Tuesday; popular house beats with DJ Kevin Wong

SPORTSWORLD INDOOR HOCKEY AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO Top 40 request with a mix of retro and disco; 7pm-12 midnight

WED LIVE MUSIC

COSMOPOLITAN MUSIC SOCIETY Jazzworks Festival: Riverbend Junior High Section Band, St. Joseph High School Jazz Band, Holy Rosary Sr. Jazz Band, MAC Jazz Combo, MAC Jazz Band



PREVUE / SAT, FEB 9 (11 PM) / NEW STRATHCONA / THE ARTERY / \$10
New Strathcona is just like Old Strathcona, except there's no gazebo nearby to buy weed from 15 year olds. But there is a bunch of DJs. Check 'em out.

EDDIE SHORTS Wednesday open stage with Chris the girl

HOOIGANZ PUB Open stage Wednesdays hosted by Rock 'n' Roli Kenny

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Open mic O'BYRNE'S Mr. Lucky

PLEASANTVIEW COMMUNITY HALL Acoustic Bluegrass jam presented by the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society every Wednesday evening

STEEPLETAX LOUNGE (acoustic) every Wed, (last Wed each month spoken word)

URBAN LOUNGE Treason, Looking East

WILD WEST Gary Shade

YARDHOP SUITE Festival: Hardesty School Jazz Band, Riverbend Junior High Band, E.S. Laird Junior Jazz Band, E.S. Laird

Music Wednesdays at Noon Duo Majoya (piano); 12:10-12:50pm, free; 468-4964 for info

REHAB SMALL MOUNTAIN Hear's To Your Health, Nai-Yuan Hu (violin), Jacques Després (piano) 5pm; free

DJS

BACKBOM VOGUE BAR Wednesdays: Soulful Deep House with Nic-E and Smoov

BAR VOGUE Wednesday Nights: with DJ Harley

BULKY LIVE FULLHOUSE Gulch Wednesdays, Best Fides Worst Wrecks... roots music with DJ Buster Friendly every Wednesday; no cover, live music once a month, Woodtop RetroActive Radio: Alternative '80s and '90s, post punk, new wave garage, Brit, mod, rock 'n' roll with U. Cool Joe; cancelled this week

BUDDY'S Hump day with DJ Sexy Sean

FOUR LOUNGE Y&N This

THE FOX Wind-up Wednesdays R&B, hip-hop, reggae, old skool, reggaeton with InVinceable, Touch It, weekly guest DJs

LEGENDS PUB Hip hop/R&B with DJ Spincycle

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Out With Your Box Out Wednesday Night; no minors; no cover

ROCKY MOUNTAIN MUD metal every Wednesday

RED STAR Guest DJs every Wednesday

STOLI'S Beatparty Wednesdays House, progressive and electronica with Rudy Electro, DJ Rystar, Space Age and weekly guests, 9pm-2am www.beatparty.net

WUNDERBAR Wednesdays with new DJ; no cover

Y&N AFTERNOONS Y&N Wednesday

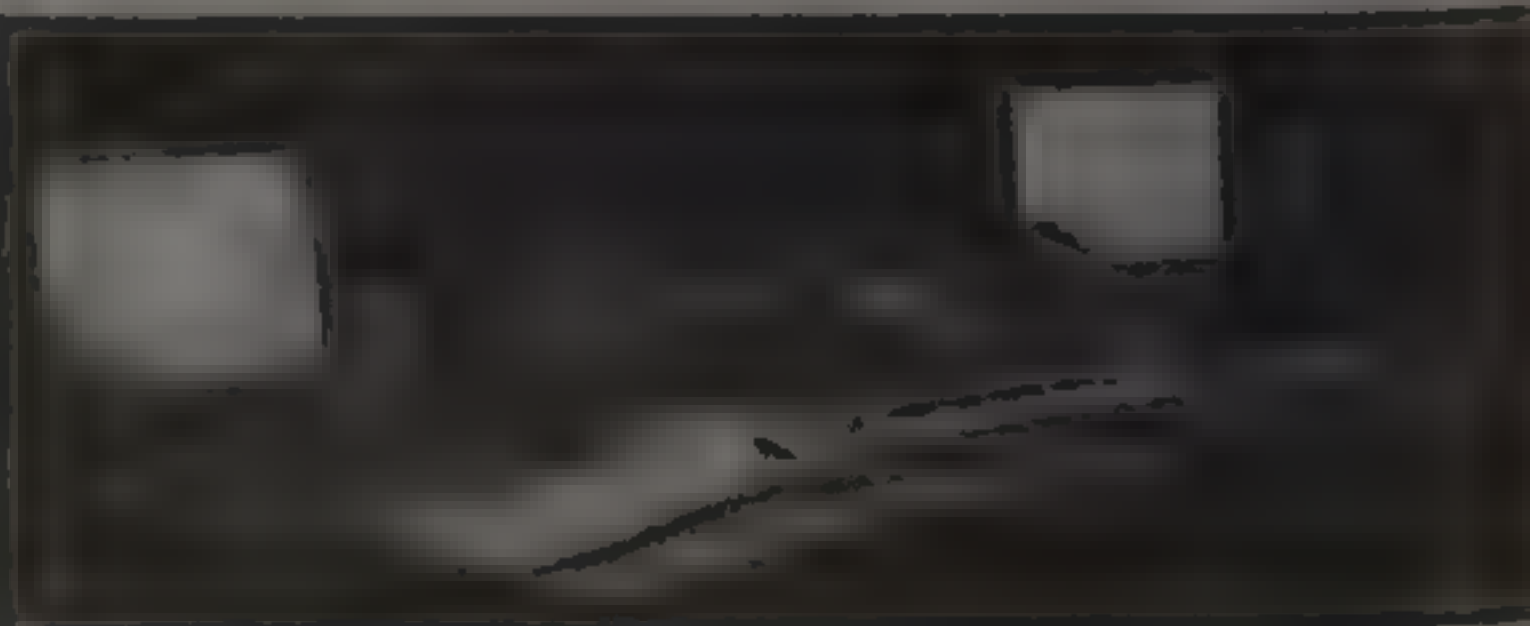
Senior Jazz Band, Louis St. Laurent Senior High Jazz; evening concerts E.S. Laird Senior High, MAC Jazz Band, Holy Rosary Sr. Jazz Band

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ALYSSA NDEL / alyssa@vviewweekly.com

"I don't do well with the cold," he says with genuine apprehension. "You're scaring me."

"We've always had trouble getting to Canada," he says, referring to an ill-fated tour that ended when singer Max Bemis got sick and had to cancel. "We really had to make it our business to get up there."

"I feel very accomplished to put out a double album when it's against all odds,"



PREVUE

SUN, FEB 10
SAY ANYTHING
WITH THRICE, ATTACK IN BLACK
EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE. \$25

REGARDLESS OF THE longer running time, the new release has made its way to the airwaves. And, thanks in part to the band's newly acquired major label backing on J Records, Say Anything expects its music to expand further than that. So those kids crying sellout can take a hike, Kent says, in a slightly less offensive way. "[Signing to a major] is almost inevitable if a

"I try to stay away from believing in sub-genres. Emo obviously isn't sub-genre anymore. I try to listen to music and try not to think about what it's classified as anymore," he says, adding, "People are so rude about it and so judgmental it was like, OK, well, we'll defend it because it's what we do and we do it well." ♥

SOON



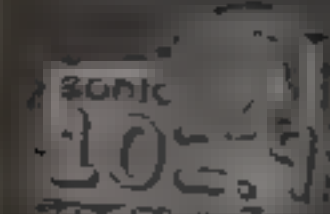
JUST ANNOUNCED - ON SALE FRIDAY

exclaim! 16th ANNIVERSARY TOUR
FEATURING

TOKYO POLICE CLUB

MAY 12
STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 7 PM - ALL AGES - TICKETS ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, LISTEN



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JUST ANNOUNCED - ON SALE FRIDAY



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MAY 20 - STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 8 PM - 18+ NO MINORS - TICKETS ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, LISTEN



PRIVATE CLUB - MEMBERS & GUESTS



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FEBRUARY 10 - STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 8 PM - 18+ 10 REQ. - TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD & FS (WEN)

PRIVATE CLUB - MEMBERS & GUESTS



HOLY F***K

FEB 22
STARLITE
DOORS 8 PM - 18+

CANCER BATS

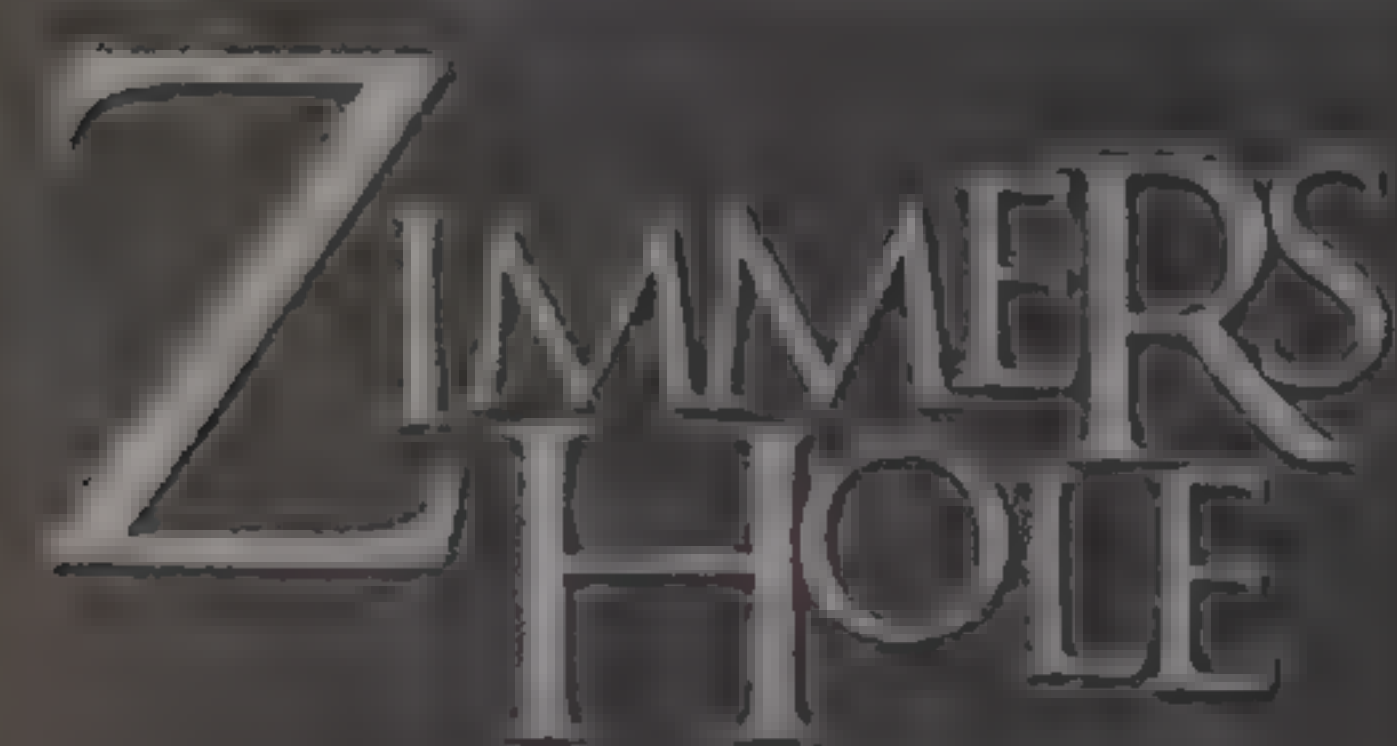
FEB 29
AVENUE SKATEPARK
DOORS 7 PM - ALL AGES



ORIGINAL LEAD GUITARIST OF KISS
SATURDAY MARCH 15
EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE



VUEWEEKLY



MAR 14 - VELVET UNDERGROUND

DOORS 8 PM - 18+ 10 REQ. - TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD & FS (WEN)



DRAGONETTE

WITH SWEET THINGS
& TIM GIBBISON

MAR 26 - STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 8 PM - 18+ 10 REQ. - TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD



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Local reggae group is starting the Fyah

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vancouverweekly.com

Fans of Edmonton's reggae reliables **Souljah Fyah** haven't been waiting in vain for the six-piece band to release its second album.

Yes, it's taken some time—it's been four years since its debut and the band was pushing for a sophomore release last spring—but as Sista J (aka Janaya Ellis) was reminded, it takes time before the *Truth Will Reveal*.

Everything was going well. Folks were—and still are—talking about Souljah Fyah as a band on the verge. The band landed a regular Sunday night gig at On the Rocks. The members were active in the community and Ellis, a music teacher by day, was voted Global's Woman of Vision for March 2007. But the record was going through some growing pains.

"The more we worked on the album, the worse it was sounding," Ellis relates. "It sounded like it was getting glitchy, and we were just having all of these technical problems and we just couldn't figure it out—like we would work until four or five in the morning, every weekend down in Calgary."

And then when the record's producer Ibo—also Ellis's partner, who is formerly of Calgary's Struggle and one of the organizers of Calgary's Reggae Festival—was involved in a serious car accident in late August of last year, everything was put on hold.

"It took a lot longer and this was a very hard year for everyone," Ellis says, "but the life lesson is to wait for the right time—you can't force anything to be done on time."

WATCHING IBO'S RECOVERY, however, has been a source of inspiration for Ellis, and she and the band were able to push forward to a stronger record—off which some tracks have already gotten notice.

"Rwanda" has been featured on Ziggy Marley's Ziggy Radio and "Abundance of Good" hit #1 on CBC's Galaxie Radio last September. What Edmontonians have known for several years now, others are beginning to notice. Souljah Fyah, with its conscious, soul-infused reggae, is a band that deserves more recognition.

Truth be told, however, Ellis says

PREVIEW

SUN, FEB 10 (8 PM)
SOULJAH FYAH
WITH SCOTT COOK, THE LONG WEEKENDS
ON THE ROCKS, \$5

she's a little afraid of the music machine. Like many of us, she watches other famous musicians get eviscerated in the press and wonders at our need to know about the problems of the likes of Amy Winehouse. For Ellis, music is a powerful medium, one that can be used for more positive vibrations.

"Do you remember that song, 'We Didn't Start the Fire'? Who did it? I think it was Billy Joel. And he just went on and on and on about all of these events that happened in our lifetimes," Ellis begins. "First of all, people look up to and feel connected with musicians. For some reason, music just speaks to everyone, so if you're actually taking a power like that and addressing important issues, and at the same time trying to be good to others and be positive and spread a positive message—that's very, very powerful." ▽

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NORDIC NOMADIC
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AT MEDICAL VISITING CHURCH
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FRI FEBRUARY 15 **CERONIMO**
AT THE PAWSE
WITH **KILL THE LIGHTS & 40 THIEVES**

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WED FEBRUARY 27 **JOSH RITTER**
AT THE JUBILEE AUDITORIUM
WITH SPECIAL GUEST **EMM GRAYER**

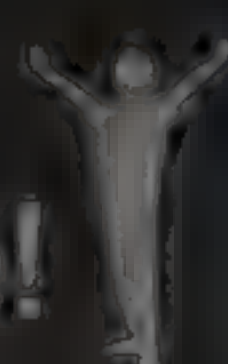
MON MARCH 3 **CRYSTAL CASTLES**
AT STARLITE ROOM
LAST GANG ARTISTS WITH SPECIAL GUEST **HEALTH**

THUR MARCH 13 **THE WAYBACKS**
AT THE JUBILEE AUDITORIUM
GUEST ARTS RECORDING ARTISTS FROM SAN FRANCISCO • GUESTS

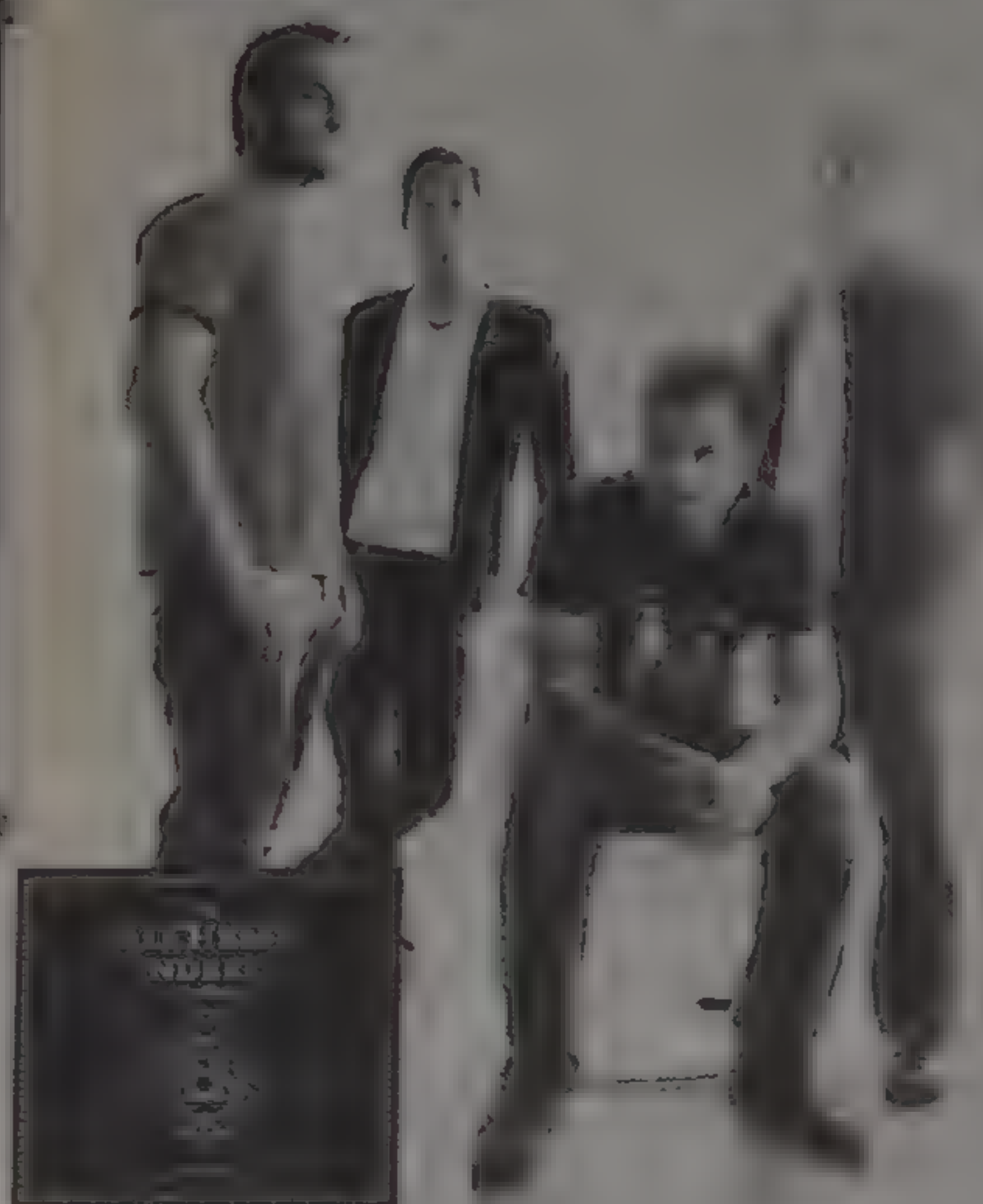
THUR MARCH 25 **JASON COLLETT**
AT THE STARLITE ROOM
AND HIS BAND? (ARTS & CRAFTS) + PETER ELIAS

MON MARCH 31 **BLACK MOUNTAIN**
AT THE STARLITE ROOM
PLUS **LADY DAWG** AND **NORDIC NOMADIC**

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Allison Moorer



March 12

Northern Alberta
Jubilee Auditorium

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Foster finds her own phenomenal voice

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuuweekly.com

You'll hear some musicians—and writers, artists, dancers, etc—talk about inspiration, hear them talk about how the music comes, not from within but through them from some other source.

Ruthie Foster doesn't say that, and that may not even be the case, but you sure can hear it. Drawing comparisons to Ella Fitzgerald and Aretha Franklin, her singing voice possesses the very vibration needed to take her listeners to another place. It's so assured and powerful that it's almost hard to believe that she used to be shy about singing.

"My mother was a beautiful singer, so singing was just not an option for me—I thought. But it turns out that she passed that on to me. It was surprising to me to be told that I actually had a voice," she says from a tour stop in Mississippi. "That's something I had to grow into, actually. Singing in front of people ... it didn't come natural to me. I was shy. I was a really shy kid and didn't want to be recognized or singled out."

It has been a process, really. With five albums of songs about her life and her experiences, it wasn't until her latest—*The Phenomenal Ruthie Foster*, released last February—that she included a couple of deeply personal songs, songs that made her feel even more vulnerable than singing in front of folks.

"You're up in front of a lot of people and you're kind of wearing your heart on your guitar strings. You just kinda

PREVIEW

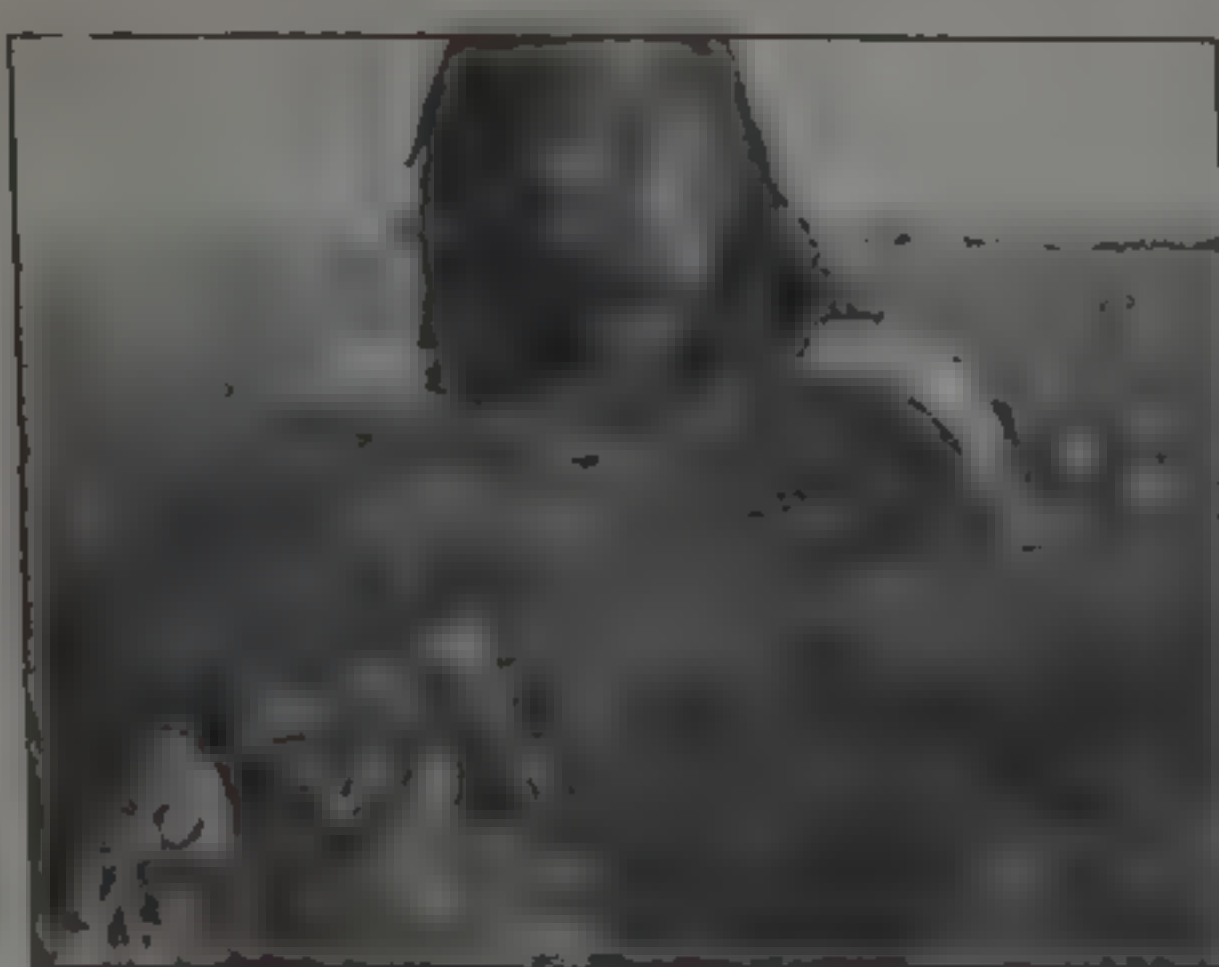
THU, FEB 14 (8 PM)
RUTHIE FOSTER
WINSPEAR CENTRE, \$33.60

letting everybody know," she laughs with a shy Texan drawl. "For me it was letting people know where I've been in the last couple of years, what's been going on with me emotionally. I was surprised and pleased at the same time that it was just another way of connecting with my audience, by just sharing my own experience. Good and bad—good and not so good."

WHILE FOSTER'S VOICE has an unprocessed, authentic quality, she is also a talented musician, delivering a blend of blues, folk and old school gospel on guitar, piano and organ. Her sound is something that audiences from Texas to Alberta have gotten behind in numbers. Foster regularly sells over 100 CDs per show, and at the Vancouver Folk Fest a couple of years ago, she sold out of over 1000 CDs.

So it's even more surprising that, growing up, Foster never saw music as her pathway out of the small town of Gause, Texas. Like many American small-town kids, she saw the military as her escape.

"It's just the way to get out, so I thought, well, you know, I'll sign up with somebody once I finished high school," she explains. "Well, my mother wasn't having any of that, so she com-



promised with me—I compromised—and she said, 'Well, why don't you go to college and then, if you still feel like you want to enlist, you can do that. But go to school first.' So I did that, and I still wanted to enlist after I graduated, and I just went and did that."

After taking music in college—an experience she says went a long way in developing her performing confidence—she joined the US Navy to take a break from music, but it wasn't long before music called her back. A year into her tour, she'd had enough of hanging around helicopters, so she joined the Navy band.

While the Navy tour got her out of Texas, music tours have taken her out of the US. And the Canadian audiences, she says, make her feel comfortable enough to try new things on stage.

"I've actually been in Canada during this time of the year, and I know to watch myself walking down the sidewalk now. We Texans don't know how to walk on ice," she says, "so I'm still learning how to do that." v

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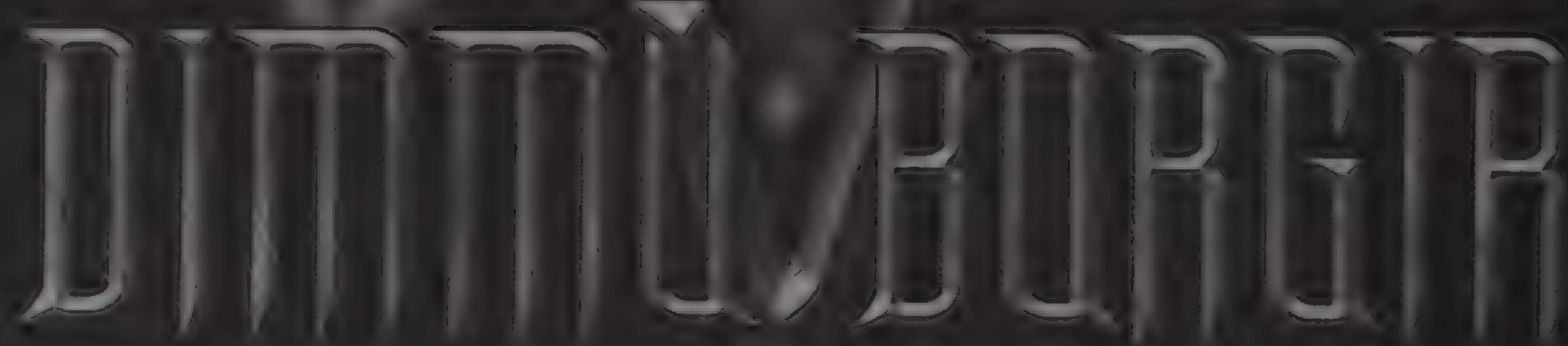
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'North, Miss Teschmacher, north!': Matt Costa steels himself for the cold

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vviewweekly.com

There's an In-N-Out Burger somewhere along the highway between Tempe, Arizona and San Diego, California. Well, there are probably a few of those, but this one is not too far from the Salton Sea, and this particular spot is where **Matt Costa** calls in for an interview, although it's not the first time the California musician has been to the place.

"There's a Best Western here and I've actually been in this Best Western before. I stayed here on a road trip that I took with a friend a couple of years ago," he chuckles over the phone from the parking lot. "We just drove out to the desert one day. I wasn't on a tour or anything we just went out to the Salton Sea. We're right by that."

"I think it's the biggest mass of water in California and it was creat-

PREVIEW

TUE, FEB 12 (8 PM)
MATT COSTA
WITH DELTA SPIRIT
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ed when the Colorado river flooded over one year and then it became this hot tourist spot I think in the '30s and '40s," he continues. "But then all the water collected all these minerals and things—stuff that was toxic—so it started killing all the fish and all the things that were in the water. So now all the sand and beaches that are all around it are all just dead fish bones and all sorts of crazy stuff, and all these hotels around it are abandoned, so it's just this weird, trippy place."

IT'S A TOUR THAT has brought Costa and his band to the Salton Sea—except for one show in Arizona,



they'll be spending a couple of weeks enjoying the luxury of touring a State

that tops Canada's population by three million people, making jaunts

that average around an hour of driving time to get to each venue.

Once that's over, though, Costa will be heading far away from his physical home in California and his metaphorical one on Jack Johnson's Hawaii-based Brushfire Records, north to Canada for his second tour within a few months. The last one saw Costa opening up for Bedouin Soundclash but this time he'll be headlining his own shows. The difference between touring California and Canada is certainly not lost on the young musician who laughs that he's currently wearing a T-shirt and sipping lemonade.

"It's different from touring in Canada where some of the drives are 12 hours between shows—long drives with no one in between there," he admits. "They've got a lot of people crammed in together here in California, all squished into a little piece of nice weather." ▼

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It's all metal, all the time in Finland

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vancouverweekly.com

Somewhere in rural Finland, in a very dark spot in the wilderness, a small group of young people is probably getting together at this very moment to blast out chugging metal riffs and squealing guitars. Perhaps there is pig's blood to be drunk, perhaps it's in an effort to curry favour with Satan, although

PREVIEW
 SUN, FEB 10 (8 PM)
SONATA ARCTICA
 WITH SANCTITY
 STARLITE ROOM, \$25

most likely if there were pig's blood to be drunk it would be in an effort to keep warm.

For Finland's **Sonata Arctica**,

there is no pig's blood—not that I know of, anyway. But there is cold. And plenty of metal. Keyboardist Henrik Klingenberg believes that the two things go hand in hand and that, in addition to the relative isolation of Finnish towns and cities, they are the reason so much ear bleeding metal erupts out of the sparsely populated country.

"It's dark and cold and you don't have anything else to do. You're kind of isolated from, for example, central Europe, and most of the towns are quite small, so when you start out it's not like you have the choice between 15 guitar players, you've got one or two guys and you have to choose between them and stick with your decision," he says. "That also means that bands tend to stick together longer even if they don't get successful. And then when you do get some shows you really have your act together."

AND IF YOU HAVE any interest in getting to know the snowy landscape of Finland better—albeit in a post-apocalyptic fashion—there is a video game featuring the members of Sonata Arctica, as well as original music by the band, called *Winterheart's Guild* that will be released soon.

"It's a role playing game that takes place in the future after a nuclear war and the band members play the characters. You get to shoot people and whatever ... I'm not too familiar with the concept but it's going to be like an adventure game," explains Klingenberg. "This company called Zelian Games contacted us and asked, they said, 'We have this idea, we'd like to do it,' and we were a little skeptical at first, but they came out to one of our shows in the UK and showed us some demos and screenshots and explained how they want the game to be and we just said that looks great go ahead. They've been working for a couple of years on it and it'll probably take one or more before it's out." ▽

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that down when I'm not playing and I completely shut that down when I'm making a record. The bizarre thing is that it means I don't play any shows for a couple of years at a time, but it's enabled me to make records. This approach keeps me able to do that."

A note of uncertainty has crept into his voice, and Hayden seems unconvinced that he'd be able to function as an artist without this compartmentalization of roles. Indeed, his tough stance was undoubtedly informed by his brush with the major labels in the '90s, an encounter that he doesn't like to discuss but which has fossilized into a full-on retreat into total control over his records. Hayden works with a trusted group of supporters, but remains the sole authority on the final product, even down to his creative directorship at the label he created, Hardwood, which he also uses to release records of artists he regards as worthy, like Basia Bulat and Cuff the Duke.

"Hardwood is an enabler," he states. "It's a good way to get those records out—two records I love—and a small way to help them. We've got distribution through Universal, who I've been working with for years. It's a good team. I don't have any grand ideas of a record empire—it's not my thing. I'm not involved at all in anything other than creative issues, not marketing and selling. I have a little more patience for that after I put out a

record—I'm involved in the records when I release them, because I've worked so hard on the record that it's like quality control. I'm aware every step of the way of how it's represented out there."

The impenetrable barrier works the other way, too: Hayden is as cautious about what he lets into his universe as he is with what he emits.

"The albums are 'of a piece,' yeah," he relates. "Musically and lyrically, influences seep in. What I'm listening to seeps in—that's why I listen to very little music while engulfed in a two-year period or so of making something. I gather up as many ideas as I can, pick the ones that are most moving to me at the time, and make a record. The music—it's not autobiographical all the time, less and less as I keep going—but there are elements of truth within elements of fiction. I'm learning how to cloak truth in fiction."

IT'S EASY TO UNDERSTAND why Hayden is reluctant to elaborate on the emotional content of any of his records, and especially why he wouldn't want to be pedantic in explaining the provenance of the songs on *In Field & Town*. It's a pretty bare record already, likely a breakup one, and a wiser, steely counterpoint to the emotional homecoming implied in *Elk Lake Serenade*. It wanders more, searching the backroads of memory for some guidepost to bring into the present, taking occasional refuge in nostalgia and unearthing evidence as to why circumstances unfold as they have. A lot of the lyrics centre on retracing the steps of relationships

and events, discovering whether the seeds of failure were sown early on, in colliding natures, and deciding which parts of experience to discard or clutch on to as hard-earned wisdom.

"There's a blurry line, and I feel funny talking about it," he says. "I know myself what's true and real on the record and what's not, but I'm not inclined to put it out there and discuss it, for several reasons. As a music listener, first and foremost—I don't want to pick up the new Tom Waits and know what's about his family and what was about some circus he went to see!"

Hayden's dry laugh fades. "That being said, I know I have to do some of this talking stuff to play live. There's a side I love: playing places that are not grungy rock clubs with gum stuck everywhere and urine smell everywhere!"

Like a mantra, he repeats: "I understand that I have to do what it takes so people will hear my music so I can play these nicer places. When I've worked so hard on something, I really want it to be heard. This record, I really want it heard."

The "whirr" of Hayden's current machine quiets. Before him stretches another part of his job he genuinely enjoys, the most naked act of delivering his words and music directly into our ears in his distinctively imperfect croaky croon. Beyond that, another period of accumulation before the next exhaustive bout of interpretation and reckoning begins. And underneath the machine, Hayden's bloody biology beats on, unmolested by industry. ▽

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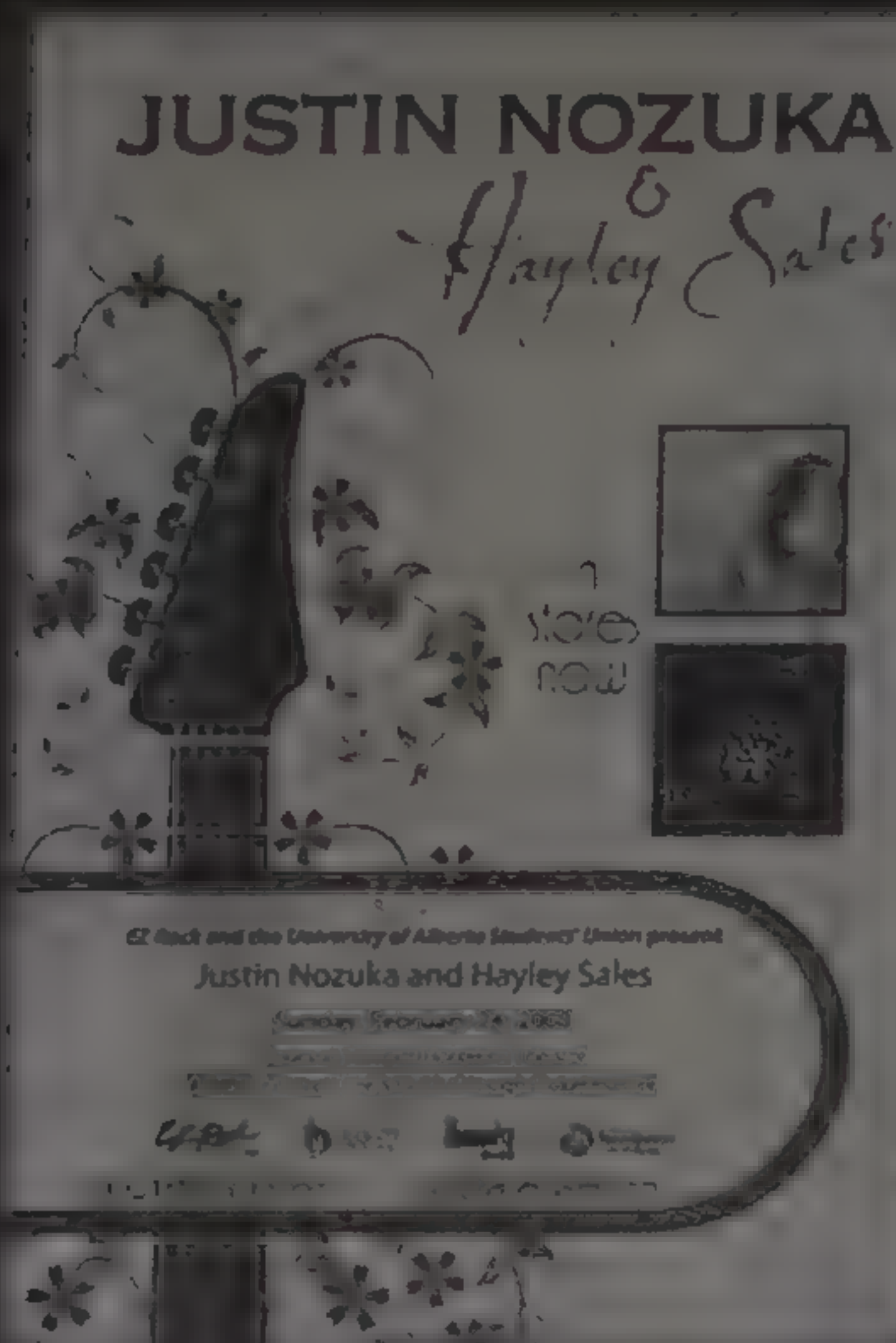
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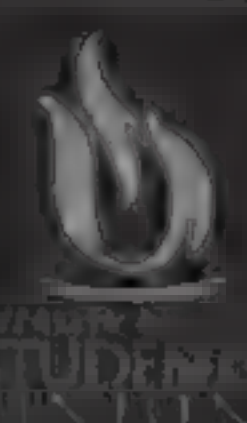
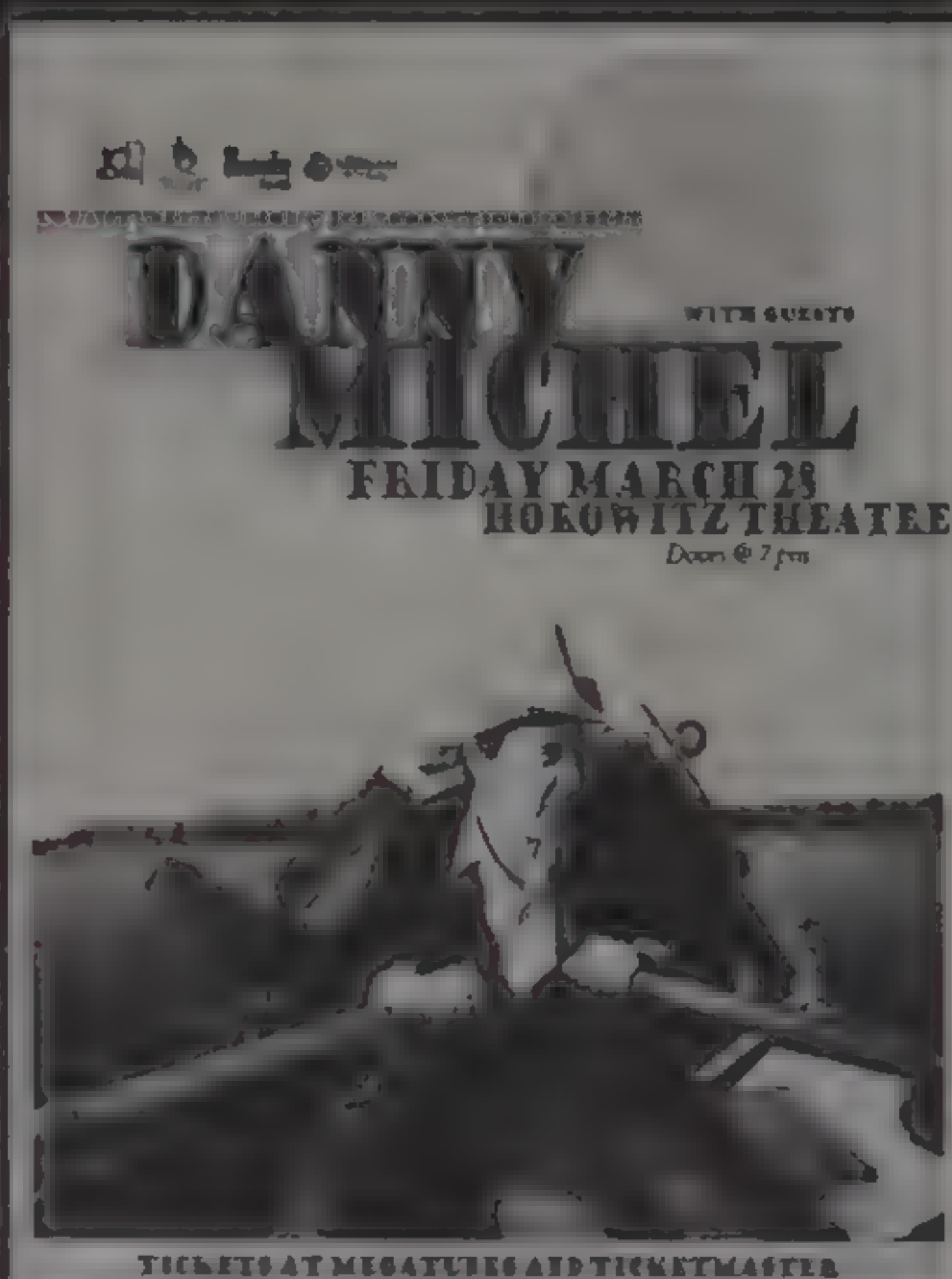
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ALBUM REVIEWS

NEW SOUNDS

THE WHITSUNDAYS
THE WHITSUNDAYS
POP/ROCK

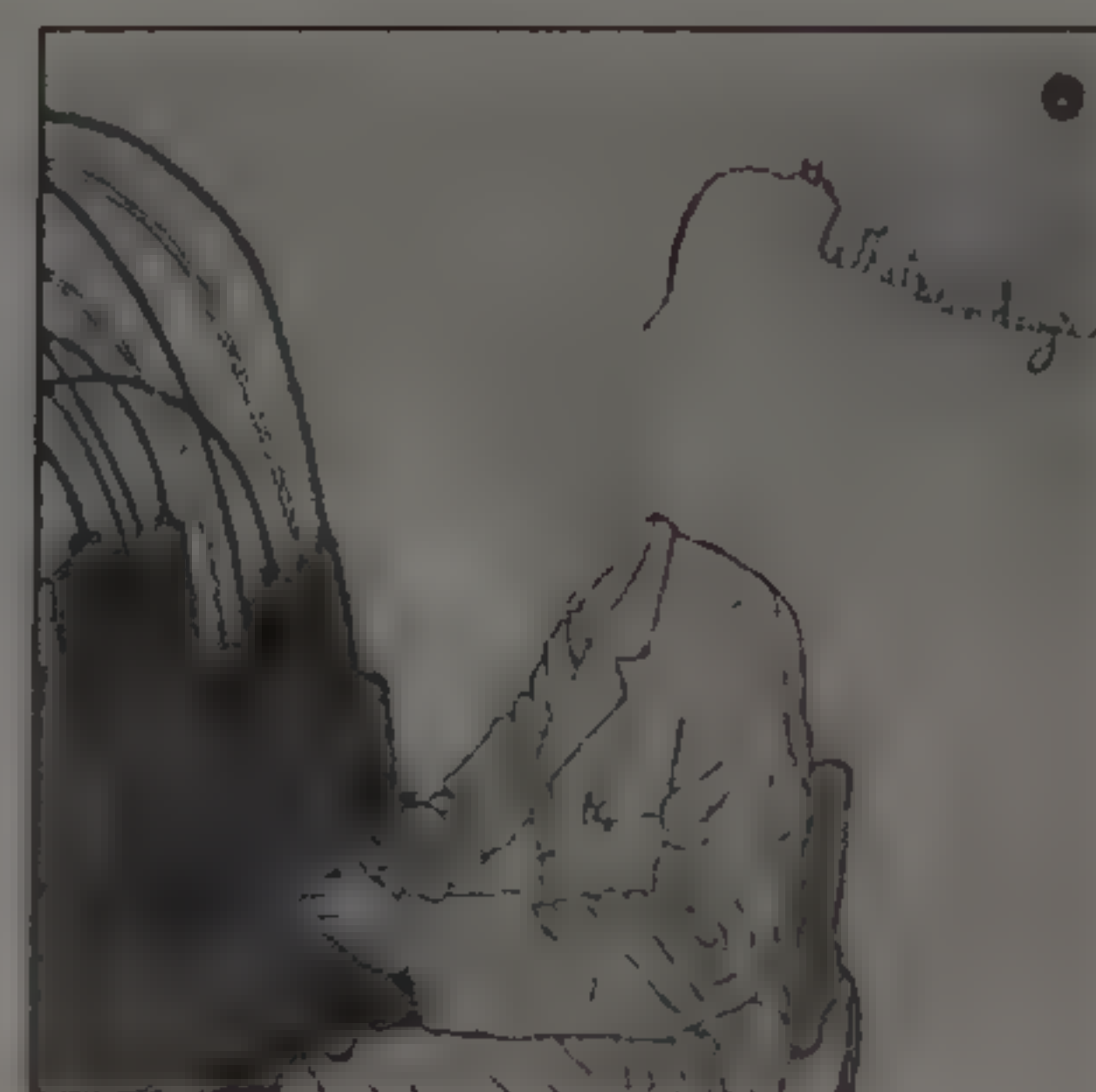
EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com

A descending organ riff slides along over top of a thumping bass line and a guitar line that reverberates its few notes through the open space that marks "Loralee," the opening track on the debut album from the Whitsundays.

The record's retro-flavoured guitars and bouncy vocals hint at an atmosphere that has its roots in the pop of the late-'60s—along with a dash of Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd—but the Whitsundays is more than just a reflection of a time gone by. There's something a little darker at work here. Some of the notes might recall another time and place, but the overall sound is at home in the here and now where the music adds up to something a little more worn and a little more weathered than when it first appeared on a beach someplace farther to the south.

That's not to say that Paul Arnusch, the band's architect and the primary participant on the debut album—Doug Organ contributes a keyboard solo on "The Ways of the Sweet Talking Boys" and live the band is fleshed out to include Clint Frazier, Nick Johnson, Lyle Bell and Aaron Parker along with Arnusch and Organ—is wallowing in misery here. Far from it, actually, as Arnusch layers his gentle vocals, with rhythms that are propulsive but never overbearing. There's a sense of forward momentum throughout—a constant push and pull that keeps things interesting with little surprises hidden in each guitar riff, drum beat or ghostly background vocal.

At least as impressive as the songwriting here is the actual sound of the album—Arnusch used an arsenal of



vintage equipment for the recording and it can be heard in the captured sounds. The music is alive with the sort of liveliness that is too often lost beneath the digital cleansing that is so often applied in today's GarageBand world. The guitars on "Antisocial" and the keyboard on "The Ways of the Sweet Talking Boys" sound at times as though they are literally about to fall apart—not in a bad way, like a '73 Ford that's rusting out as it crawls along, but more like a drag racer that's being pushed to its limits, ready to explode from the power of the engine.

At just over half an hour, The Whitsundays doesn't overstay its welcome, indulging in 10 variations of the same sound—there's a cohesiveness to the album that makes it a pleasure to listen to from beginning to end. The songs work together to form a whole, and Arnusch stays focused on keeping the sonic clutter to an absolute minimum, leaving plenty of space for each instrument to be heard in the mix. The sound is surprisingly complex, and it's easy to focus on a particular instrument and hear something new upon every listen. Further exploration reveals other twists in each instrument's part. Arnusch has created an impressive album, and it will be interesting to hear what sort of evolution the songs take live with the whole band involved in the performances.

The Whitsundays plays the ARTery on Fri, Feb 8 (8 pm), \$10.

LIAM FINN
I'LL BE LIGHTNING
YEP/ROCK

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com

This lushly bearded young New Zealander is the eldest child of Crowded House/Split Enz songwriter Neil, and the boy has daddy's surefooted pop genes and fully-stocked analogue studio, as well as what sounds like one heck of a family record collection (judging by *I'll be Lightning*, the Hollies, early New Wave, mid-period Beatles, Queen and the Bee Gees were in heavy rotation). Sonny's not riding on any coat-tails—this is a magnificent album elaborately constructed yet unfettered unabashedly singalong (often dance along) but smart with multiple musical reference points. Like Finn the Elder, the lyrical territory is largely about interpersonal stuff, scrapbook dust-ups and disappointments, but whether he's talking to an ex-girl or a pack of small-town yobboes, he's a skilled worker of words. It's nice to see dynastic perks occasionally yielding a worthwhile furtherance of genius.

THE LAST DEAL
BERDACHE
ROAST

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

There is something dependably familiar about Berdache, the first full-length from local alt-punks the Last Deal, and I don't think it has anything to do with the fact I live just down the street from the house they recorded it in, not to mention that I regularly hear the rock emanating from the basement almost any time I walk by. The band trades in a firmly '90s-influenced sound, somewhere between early grunge and more straight-ahead pop-punk, the kind of music that would make any late-'90s/early-'00s break into the solidarity nod of shared musical memories. You could probably make the argument that they could stand to branch out a bit more, but you certainly couldn't say they don't do what they do well.

The Last Deal plays the Jekyll and Hyde (10610 - 100 Ave) Sat, Feb 9 (7:30 pm) \$10 (all ages).

SHANE PHILIP
IN THE MOMENT
INDEPENDENT

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vuweekly.com

If there's a finite amount of musical acumen floating around the universe then people like multi-instrumentalist Shane Philip are really blowing it for the rest of us. Driven by the haunting sounds of the didgeridoo, Philip invites

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inevitable comparisons to Xavier Rudd as he makes his way through spells on guitar, slide, lap slide, djembe, electronic kick and aslatua to back up his vocals. Folk dominates, but Philip does depart the genre on occasion, as in the reggae track "Same Road."

While the talents of the BC native are undeniable—and his live show is likely something to behold—many of the songs on this, his third album, come across as a little too ... *shanti*. Not that it's bad, but songs like "Good Morning" and "Smile" are either your thing or they aren't. The infectious instrumental "Mocha" is the album's highlight, showing off, along with the album's final track, "Serenity," Philip's multi-instrumental prowess.

THE SLEEPLESS NIGHTS TURN INTO VAPOUR Lew Kelly

LEWIS KELLY / lewis@vuweekly.com

Turn Into Vapour, the third and latest record from Halifax six-piece the Sleepless Nights, is a little bit schizophrenic. Though it's quite brief at just over 35 minutes, the record manages at least one major sonic shift: after track five ("Amounts To Nothing," an apt title considering the rest of the album), the band seriously turns down the fun and turns up the suck. Prior to this, *Vapour* is diverse, fast and fun. Hypnotic guitar riffs sit well over busy drumming and lots of call-and-response vocals. Before they jump the shark, the Nights sounds a little bit like Band of Horses crossed with Dog Day and played back at double speed. Unfortunately, the last three songs of *Vapour* are pretentious and boring. This reversal stings all the more for the awesomeness of what precedes it.

HAWKSLEY WORKMAN BETWEEN THE BEAUTIFULS Universal

KRISTINA DE GUZMAN / kristina@vuweekly.com

It seems like Hawksley Workman will never get over whoever it is he's been writing about since, or perhaps even before, *Lover/Fighter*. Like *Treeful of Starling*, cool-headed insights on lost love and loneliness with an abundance of nature metaphors can be found here. Not nearly as sparse as *Treeful of Starling* or as heavy as *Lover/Fighter*, however, *Between the Beautifuls* reaches a happy medium, going further to remind us of Workman's versatile style. The topic of his failed relationship would be gruelling if he weren't so introspective and if his musings weren't sounding so damn beautiful. It makes one wonder why this woman that Workman continues to agonize over hasn't taken him back yet.

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MUSIC ENTER SANDOR STEVEN SANDOR steven@vuweekly.com

No matter which side of the digital copyright battle you fall on, chances are your spokespeople like to manipulate statistics in order to further their arguments that Canada should either get tough on piracy or let the digital-download chips fall where they may.

Over the past few weeks, both pro- and anti-legislation types have been trumpeting the Nielsen SoundScan figures for 2007. The recording industry claims the stats show that piracy is destroying the music biz; meanwhile, free-internet types, such as the Fair Copyright for Canada group led by University of Ottawa prof Michael Geist, claim the stats show that the music industry is healthier than ever.

Remember this: it's all propaganda—and, for the most part, it's bull-shit.

First, to take on the Canadian Recording Industry Association. It says that Nielsen shows that only 1.98 digital albums were sold in Canada last year, making up just 4.5 per cent of the total albums sold in the country. In its bumpf, it claims, "The figures show that modest digital sales in Canada fall far short of making up for the sharp, long-term decline in sales of physical formats."

Wait a second there. Yes, digital albums may make up a fraction of the market, but how many people buy entire albums on iTunes? We pick and choose songs. According to Nielsen—

and not reported by CRIA—the number of all digital tracks purchased in Canada last year rose to 70.4 million, up from 2006's total of 64.1 million. That's an increase of 9.8 per cent.

GEIST, OF COURSE, has a different take on the stats. "Despite the repeated sky-is-falling claims from CRIA, the actual data keeps telling a different story," he writes on his blog.

But even though digital sales are up, physical CD sales are down 9.5 per cent. And Geist hasn't pointed out that discounted digital tracks aren't as good for the bottom line as physical CD sales. Yes, record labels do find a way to take their slice of a 99-cent iTunes download, but in 2007, Apple went in front of the Canadian Copyright Board to fight a decision to force the computer giants to pay any more than 5.3 per cent per download to songwriters. So, does a rise in digital sales really mean that much more to the artists?

Funny thing is, both Geist and CRIA talk a lot about the industry as a whole. But neither really get into what is happening to the bottom lines of the people who are supposed to matter the most: the songwriters and the musicians. Until their arguments start to discuss what copyright legislation would mean to the grassroots of the industry—the artists themselves—both Geist and CRIA will continue to prove they are simply shills who happen to work on opposite sides. ▽

Steven Sandor is a former editor-in-chief of *Vue Weekly*, now an editor and author living in Toronto.

HAIR! QUICK SPINS WHITEY AND TB PLAYER quickspins@vuweekly.com

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Leapfrogging their way
To the top of the heap by
The end of song two

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DAVID VANDERVELDE NOTHING NO SECRETLY CANADIAN

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KELLEY STOLTZ CIRCULAR SOUNDS SURPRISE

If Ray Davies had
Slept in Brian Wilson's bed ...
That would have been weird!

LENNY KRAVITZ IT IS TIME FOR A LOVE REVOLUTION VIRGIN

Someone needs to give
Ol' Lenny a swift kick on
His well chiseled ass!

DAILEY & VINCENT DAILEY & VINCENT ROUNDER

Ramped up hillbillies
Shred that bluegrass faster than
A John Deere mower

SECRET LIVES OF THE FREEMASONS WEEKEND WARRIORS VICTORY

A decent job of
Doing crap that other bands
Have already done

AMANDA SHAW PRETTY RUNS OUT ROUNDER

This is the reason
Why I stopped hanging out in
Bad coffeehouses

LIVES OF MANY THE SWEET ART OF DECEIVING INDEPENDENT

Somewhat akin to
Minus the Bear, minus the
Interesting bits

FULL MOON FOLK CLUB

COMING UP!

FEBRUARY 8

GRAHAM GUEST BAND

WITH SPECIAL GUEST

LITTLE MISS HIGGINS

Tix \$17 Available at Southside Sound & Tix On The Square

"Good food, good people, great music!"

St Basils Cultural Centre
10819-71 Ave info: 438-6410 www.fmfc.org

Arts Foundation North Arts

RAINE MAIDA

SECOND SHOW ADDED!

MA SELL OUT

SATURDAY MARCH 15

THE STARLITE ROOM

EARLY SHOW — 18+ — ON SALE FRIDAY AT 10:00 AM

LIVENATION.COM
1-800-451-0008

EVENTS WEEKLY

FAX YOUR FREE LISTINGS TO 438-3888
OR E-MAIL GLENYS AT
LISTINGS@VUEWEEKLY.COM
DEADLINE IS FRIDAY AT 3 PM

CLUBS/LECTURES

ARTS OUTREACH BIG BANDS

for the Arts (497-4303) • For musicians of all levels to play a variety of music • Tue or Wed (7:30-9:30pm)

AWA 12 STEP SUPPORT GROUP

Presbyterian Church basement, N. door, 6 Bernard Dr, Bishop St, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert • For adult children of alcoholic and dysfunctional families • Meet every Mon including holidays (7:30pm)

IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

Southminster-Steinhaver United Church, 10740-19 Ave • *Christian Reflections on Living in the Alberta Energy Economy* with Diana Gibson, John Hiemstra, Bob McKeon, Nancy Steeves • Sat, Feb. 9 (9am-4pm) • \$20 (adult)/\$10 (student); incl. lunch, pre-register sjj2008@live.ca

BUDDHISM LECTURE SERIES-A PHILOSOPHY

FOR LIVING SGI Culture Centre, 10711-107 Ave, 2nd Fl • Lecture followed by discussion • Sat, Feb 16 (1-2pm) • Free

CANADIAN NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

1205-101 St (479-1999) • Basketball; Mon (5-7pm) • Healing Circle; Mon (6-8pm) • Boxing; Mon/Thu (7-9pm), Tue (5-7pm) • Volleyball; Tue (6-8pm) • Sewing Circle; Tue (6-8pm) • Beadwork Class; Wed (6-8pm) • C.N.F.C. Pow-wow; Wed (6-9pm) • Hip-Hop Class; every Thu (5-7pm) • Cree Class; Thu (6-8pm) • Elders and Residency; Fri (all day) • Safe Using and Harm Reduction; last Fri every month (11am-12pm) • Tobacco Reduction; every Fri (1-2pm) • Drop-in Night; Fri (6-8pm)

DOCUMENTARY REEL WORLD SERIES-SPRING

DUST: THE UNTOLD STORY OF LIFE AFTER THE TSUNAMI U of A Civil Engineering Building/Physics Building (CEB) 325 • Wed, Feb. 13 (5pm) • Free

EDMONTON NATURE CLUB

Royal Alberta Museum • Monthly meeting with Dr. Colleen Cassidy St. Clair speaking on *Corridors for Conservation: Connecting Habitat for Wildlife in Urban, Rural, and Protected Areas, Using Animal Behavior to Reduce Conflict Between Humans and Animals* • Fri, Feb. 15 (7pm coffee, 7:30pm meeting)

THE FUTURE OF NUCLEAR POWER IN ALBERTA

U of A U of A Engineering Teaching and Learning Centre (ETLC), Rm 1-001 • A roundtable discussion with panellists Dr. Jeremy Whitlock, Dr. Martyn Unsworth, Dr. Cindy Jardine, Leila Darwish, Pat McNamara, and David McColl • Thu, Feb. 7 (6-8:30pm) • Free

FUTURE TUESDAYS

Rm 129, U of A Education Bldg, 87 Ave (492-5055) • Tom Keating, *Canada's Future in the World* • Tue, Feb. 12 • \$10/\$5 (ELLA member/student)

GOOD MEDICINE FILM FESTIVAL

Stanley A Milner Library Theatre • Showing of Margaret Edson's film *Wit*; speakers to follow • Sat, Feb. 16 (2pm) • Free

GREENPEACE

The Alberta Tar Sands will single-handedly stop Canada from reaching our Kyoto targets. If you want to put an end to one of the world's most destructive projects e-mail mhudema@greenpeace.org

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY

11456 Jasper Ave (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns; contact7@hivedmonton.com

IMAGES ALBERTA CAMERA CLUB

School, 6415-106 St (469-9776/452-6224) www.imagesab.ca • Meets the 2nd and 4th Thu (8pm) every month featuring presentations, speakers, workshops, outings. Photographers of all levels are welcome

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Edmonton Room, Stanley A. Milner Library • A live musical performance with Doreen Smith (flute) and Jia Jia Yung (Celtic harp) of *The Sound of a Full Cassandra* [sic]. Illustrator Juliet M. Macdonald's drawings will accompany the music and we will talk about make the picture book • Sat, Feb. 16 • Sat, Feb. 16 (2-4pm) • Free

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OPEN HOUSE

9125-50 St (465-3534) • Sat, Feb. 9 (10-2pm)

LAUGH MORE IN 2008!

Information sessions start-up every month at various locations in

Edmonton. Relax, exercise and perhaps make a new friend • \$20 (donation) e-mail: info@steen-work-lifebalance.com

MEDITATION • Gaden Samten Ling Tibetan

Buddhist Meditation Society: 11403-101 St, www.gadensamtenling.org (479-0014) by Kushok Lobsang Dhamchoe; beginner Tue (7pm); intermediate Wed (7pm); advanced Sun (11am-1pm) • **Brahma Kumarie World Spiritual Organization,** 208, 10132-105 St (425-1050) www.bkwsu.org; Raja Yoga Meditation • **Tranquility Meditation Tibetan Tradition** 10502-70 Ave (633-6157) www.karmatashling.org; Beginners welcome, instruction available; Wed (7pm); free

MEMORIAL MARCH FOR ALL THE MISSING

AND MURDERED WOMEN OF EDMONTON

Sacred Heart Parish Church, 10821-96 St (455-4658) • Please wear red or purple • Thu, Feb. 14 (6:30-9:30pm)

MULTIART HALL-ALBERTA COLLEGE CAMPUS

www.macewqan.ca/globalcollegeweek • Cultural showcase • Fri, Feb. 8 (11am-12:30pm)

PARENT TALK (481-1292)

Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton offers support groups and workshops for parents at various city locations

PRIME MINISTER CONVERSATION

SERIES-JEAN CHRÉTIEN Myer Horowitz Theatre, U of A campus • *Advancing Canada-Changing the World*, Jean Chrétien in conversation with Jim Edwards • Thu, Feb. 7 (6:30-8:30pm) • \$10 (student)/\$25 (non-students) at TicketMaster, 451-8000

SELF ESTEEM SUPPORT GROUP (496-5930)

For women who are experiencing chaos as a result of a life crisis and who feel isolated • Group meets every week

SOCIAL CHANGE TO MEET CLIMATE CHANGE

of A Telus Professional Centre, Rm 150 (780-492-8281) • Presentation by Dr. Lynn McDonald • Thu, Feb. 7 (5-7pm) • Free

SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVIE NIGHT

of Edmonton, Main Hall, 10804-119 St • 4th Fri every month (6:30pm door) • \$5 donations; pay-what-you-can at the door

SUCCESSFUL RENEWABLE ENERGY

INCENTIVES FOR ALBERTA-HOW TO

TRANSITION TO A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

World of Science, Star Theatre 11211-142 St (439-5608) • Tim Weis will talk about what has worked and hasn't worked in other countries, as well as the options that Alberta has to foster the rapid growth of renewable energy • Tue, Feb. 12 (7pm) • Free

THOUGHTFUL TUESDAY

Steeps Tea Lounge, 11116-82 Ave (988-8105) • Documentary, *Save Our Land, Save Our Town* • Tue, Feb. 12 (7pm) • Free

TOURETTE SYNDROME

Academy of King Edward, 8525-101 St, North door (1-866-824-9764) • Support meetings for TS adults and parents of TS kids • 1st Wed; until June (7pm)

TOASTMASTERS CLUBS • Chamber

Toastmasters Club: Chamber of Commerce, 600, 9990 Jasper Ave (459-5206); Thu (6pm) • **MacEwan:** Grant MacEwan College, Rm 5-238, 10700-104 Ave (633-3921); Fri (noon-1pm) • **N'Orators Toastmasters Club:** Londonderry Public Library www.norators.com; Wed (7-8:45pm) • **Power Speakers:** Grant MacEwan Centre for the Arts, Rm 437, 10045-156 St (459-0642); Wed (7-9pm) • **Pursuers:** Best Western Cedar Park Inn, 5116 Gateway Boulevard (457-0808); Wed (7-9pm) • **Chanticleer:** Kingsway Rm, Millard Health Building, 131 Airport Rd (498-4608/474-1138) Thu (7-8:30am) • **Upward Bound:** Norquest College, Rm 601, 10215-108 St (454-3720); every Wed (7-8:45pm)

VEGETARIANS OF ALBERTA

Riverdale Hall, 9231-100 Ave • Monthly pot-luck dinner, bring a vegetarian, vegan or raw dish to serve at least 6 as well as your own plates and cutlery • Sun, Feb. 10 • \$3 (member)/\$5 (non-member)

WILDFLOWER SEED PLANTING

9231-100 Ave • Presented by Bruce Bashforth • \$5 (door), \$2 for each 12 pack of seeds • Sun, Feb. 10 (1:30-3:30pm)

WOMEN IN BLACK

In front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil the 1st and 3rd Sat (10-11am) every month, stand in silence for a world without violence • Sat, Feb. 16 (10am-11:00am)

YEP-YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONAL

Remedy Café, 8631-109 St • YEP, second anniversary meeting • Wed, Feb. 13 (5:30pm) • Free

QUEER LISTINGS

AFFIRM SUNNYBROOK-RED DEER

Red Deer (403-347-6073) • Affirm welcome LG8TQ people and their friends, family, and allies, meet at Sunnybrook United Church the 2nd Tue (7pm) every month

AGAPE Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender differences in education and culture focus group • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bwedmonton •

Social group for bi-curious and bisexual women • 2nd Thu (7:30pm) every month

BOOTS AND SADDLES

10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDYS NITE CLUB

117258 Jasper Ave (488-7736) • Open nightly 9pm-3am, Fri 8pm-3pm • Sun: Rotating drag shows with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair in The Stardust Lounge and GoDiva and Donnatella NE1 in The GoDonna Show, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Mon: Amateur strip contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Tue: Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Hump day with DJ Sexxy Sean • Thu: Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Fri: We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm • Sat: Undie night for men only, free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser

DOWN UNDER MEN'S BATHHOUSE

7231 Jasper Ave (482-7950) • Open 24/7 • www.gayed-monton.com

EDMONTON MUSIC NIGHT

A mix of music group, couples and singles welcome • E-mail edmontonmusicnight@hotmail.com for more info

EDMONTON PRIME TIMERS (EPT)

Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 Street • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common social interests meet the 2nd Sun (2:30pm) of most months for a social period, a short meeting and a guest speaker, discussion panel or a potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month. email edmontonpt@yahoo.ca, www.primetimerswww.org/edmonton

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

www.edmontonrba.org • Monthly after business mixer: Network and share contacts in the GLBT business community • 2nd Wed every month

GLBT SPORTS AND RECREATION

monton.ca • Women's Drop-In Recreational Badminton; Oliver School Gym, 10227-118 St (465-3620); Wed (6-7:30pm) • Ballroom dancing; all genders; ballroom@teamedmonton.ca • Bootcamp; St. Alphonsus, 11624-81 St; Mon (7-8pm); bootcamp@teamedmonton.ca • Bowling: Gateway Lanes, 100 3414 Gateway Blvd; Sat (5-7pm); bowling@teamedmonton.ca • Curling with Pride: Granite Curling Club, 8620-107 St; Mon (7:15pm) until Mar. 17, 2008; curling@teamedmonton.ca • Running: Sun, Tue, Thu; running@teamedmonton.ca • Swimming: NAIT pool, 11752-106 St; Tue (8-9pm), Thu (7:30-8:30pm); swimming@teamedmonton.ca • Volleyball; 101 Amiskiwacy Academy, Municipal Airport Terminal just off Kingsway; Wed recreational (8-10pm); recvolleyball@teamedmonton.ca; Thu Intermediate; volleyball@teamedmonton.ca • YOGA (Hatha): Free Lion's Breath Yoga; every Sun (2-3:30pm); yoga@teamedmonton.ca

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB

Boots, 10242-106 St (387-3343) • Crossdressers, transsexuals, friends and supporters meet 2nd Thu every month; http://groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton_illusions/ • Feb. 14

INSIDE/OUT

U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu every month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Kris (kwells@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE

404, 10408-124 St, www.edmlivingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Tue (7-9pm); Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

LAWRENCE SARAH FOUNDATION

Jean, Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV-AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) every month • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB

www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue, Thu

PFLAG

Pride Centre, 9540-111 Ave • Support meeting for parents, families and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people • 1st Tue (7pm) every month • Information phone Ruby at 436-1998 after 6pm, or edmontonab@pflagcanada.ca

PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON

(488-3234) • Open: Tue-Fri 1pm-10pm, Sat 1-6:30pm • Drop-in, library, and community internet services available • LGBT Seniors Drop-in: A social time for seniors of all genders to get together with tea and snacks; every Thu (2-4pm) • Women's Discussion Group: An open forum for self-identified queer friendly women to discuss a variety of topics that interest participants; every Fri (7-9pm) • Suit Up and Show Up: AA big book study group; every Sat (12pm) • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth (up to 25 years) support and social group; every Sat (7-9pm) e-mail yuy@shaw.ca • Womenspace: Board meeting 1st

Sun every month (10:30am-12:30pm) • Trans Education/Support Group: A place to come and be yourself. Support and education for Transsexual, Transgendered, Intersexed, Two-Spirited and questioning individuals at any point in transition; 1st and 3rd Sun every month (2-4pm); www.albertatrans.org • Sunday Night Men's Discussion Group: Mens social and discussion group with facilitator Rob Wells; every Sun (7pm); robwells780@hotmail.com • HIV Support Group; 2nd Mon every month (7pm); Richard at 488-3234 • TTIQ Alliance: Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and questioning. Support meeting offering education, advocacy and support for men, women and youth, support meeting; 2nd Tue every month (7:30pm) • PFLAG: A support and resource group for parents and friends of GLBT individuals; 1st Tue every month (7pm)

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

11526-76 Ave (436-1555) • People of all sexual orientations are welcome, Sunday worship at 10am

SINGLE LESBIANS 40 PLUS

group gathers once a month on Sat for conversation over tea and coffee • Information e-mail: single-women40plus@hotmail.com

STEAMWORKS

11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

WOMONSPACE

(780-482-1794) • A non-profit lesbian organization, organized activities held monthly including licenced non-smoking dances, coffee houses, family events, games nights, golf tournaments and more • www.gaycanada.com/womonspace, e-mail: womonspace@gmail.com

WOODY'S

11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Tue Karaoke with Tizzy and Patrick • Sat-Sun Pool Tournaments

SPECIAL EVENTS

BOLLYWOOD THEME PARTY

Maharaja Banquet Hall, 9257-34A Ave (938-3360) • Valentine's dinner and dance presented by Jan Khan and Virmani Inc • Feb. 16 • \$40 (adv)/\$50 (door)

CHINESE NEW YEAR CARNIVAL

City Hall • Celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Rat with crafts, games, performances, Chinese painting, musical instruments, GO, Beijing Opera, martial arts and free food • Sat, Feb. 9 (11am-5pm) • Free

CHINESE NEW YEAR GALA

Winspear Centre • Banquet and show • Sat, Feb. 16 (5pm) • Tickets available at 428-5035

DEJA VU-MOVIE NIGHT AND POTLUCK

Unity Church, 13210-106 Ave (913-6466) • Potluck, showing of *Deja Vu*, rated PG, followed by a discussion • Fri, Feb. 8, (5:30pm potluck, 7-9pm movie, discussion) • \$5 donation

LUNCHEON OF LOVE

Fairmont Hotel Macdonald, Wedgewood Room, 10065-100 St (425-8086) • Join Romeo and Juliet and other celebrity couples who will share your table...and their secrets for lasting love • Mon, Feb. 11 • \$60

MAGICAL MOMENTS IN TIME

Musical Moments for the Performing Arts, 4308-50 St, Leduc • Illusion show of magic, dance, and theatre with Ted and Marion Outerbridge • Sun, Feb. 10 (2pm) • \$16 (adult)/\$12 (child 12 and under) at TIX on the Square, 420-1757

SILVER SKATE FESTIVAL AND WINTER

CELEBRATION

Hawrelak Park (488-1960) • Arts, culture, sport and recreation for all ages. Includes North American Marathon Speed Skating Championships, and the Edmonton Winter Triathlon, www.silverskatefestival.org • Feb. 16, 17, 20 • City Hall opening ceremonies: entertainment by the Strathcona String Quartet; Fri, Feb. 15 (noon)

TAPHOUSE PUB

9020 McKenney Ave, St. Albert • Jake Cockrane, benefit and silent auction for local teen critically injured in Mexico • Sat, Feb. 9 (11am-2am)

VALENTINE DAY LATIN DANCE

Portuguese Canadian Hall, 12964-52 St (433-7494) • Live music by Latin bands Sonora Tropical and America Rosa • Sat, Feb. 16 (8pm) • \$20 (donation at the door)

VIDEO GAMES LIVE

Jubilee Auditorium (451-8000) • Co-creator and conductor, Jack Wall; including world premiere of Mass Effect created by BioWare • Sun, Feb. 17 (8pm); pre-show festival in lobby at 5:30pm • \$35-65 at TicketMaster

KARAOKE

BLIND PIG 32 St. Anne Street, St Albert • Wed/Fri: Karaoke with Shelly

BILLY BOB'S SPORTS BAR

Continental Inn, Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Wed (8pm-12am); Thu, Fri, Sat (9:30pm-1:30am); with Right Said Ed

CASTLEDOWN'S PUB

16753-100 St • Tue (9pm-1am); with Off-Key Entertainment

CROWN AND ANCHOR

15277 Castledowns Rd (472-7696) • Thu (10:30pm) • Wed: Name that Tune

GAS PUMP

10166-114 St (488-4841) • Tue (9:30pm); Gord's Best Live Singing Show

HAWKEYES TOO 10044-102 St (421-8898) • Fri (8pm-midnight); Hot Karaoke Productions

HOOLIGANZ PUB

10704-124 St (452-1168) • Fri Karaoke with Krista, Liquid Entertainment

INGLEWOOD PUB

12402-118 Ave (451-1390) • Karaoke every Thu, Fri and Sat

KNIGHTS PUB SOUTH

19 Ave, 105 St (461-0587) • Sat (10pm-2am); Gord's Best Live Singing Show

LIONSHEAD PUB

Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway Blvd (431-5815) • Sun (8pm); With Evolution Entertainment

MAZADAR

10725-104 Ave (429-4940) • Fri (5pm late); Karaoke with Chris

MOJO'S

Best Western Hotel, Fort Saskatchewan (998-7888) • Fri (9:30pm); with Sonia/Prosound Productions

MONA LISA'S PUB

9606-118 Ave (477-7752) • Karaoke Thu, Fri, Sat with great hosts, sound and songs

NEWCASTLE PUB

6108-90 Ave (490-1999) • Thu Karaoke

NIKITA'S

10162-100A St (414-0606) • Karaoke Tue and Thu (7pm-12am) with Shelley

O'CONNOR'S IRISH PUB

9013-88 Ave (469-8165) • Thu (9pm): Name that Tune

ON THE ROCKS

11740 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Karaoke Mon (9:30pm); with Wil Clark and Mr Entertainment • Salsa Rocks: Cuban salsa DJ; Thu (9pm)

ORLANDO'S 1

15163-121 St (457-1649) • Wed/Thu/Sun (9:30pm-2am); with TLC Entertainment

OVERDRIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD PUB

9888-5457 • Sat (9pm); Karaoke hosted by Jenny Joy

ROSARIOS

11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Longest running Karaoke bar; 7 days a week

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL

Downtown, 10604-10 St (423-3499) • Mon-Sat (9pm); Sun (7pm); with Ruth • Highstreet, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm) • Old Strathcona, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); Thu-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) • 99 St, 63 Ave, Thu-Sat (9pm-1am); with Off-Key Entertainment

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Jacobs and Barclay battle it out for title of queerest of them all

LGBT

QUEERMONTON

TED KERR
ted@vuwweekly.com

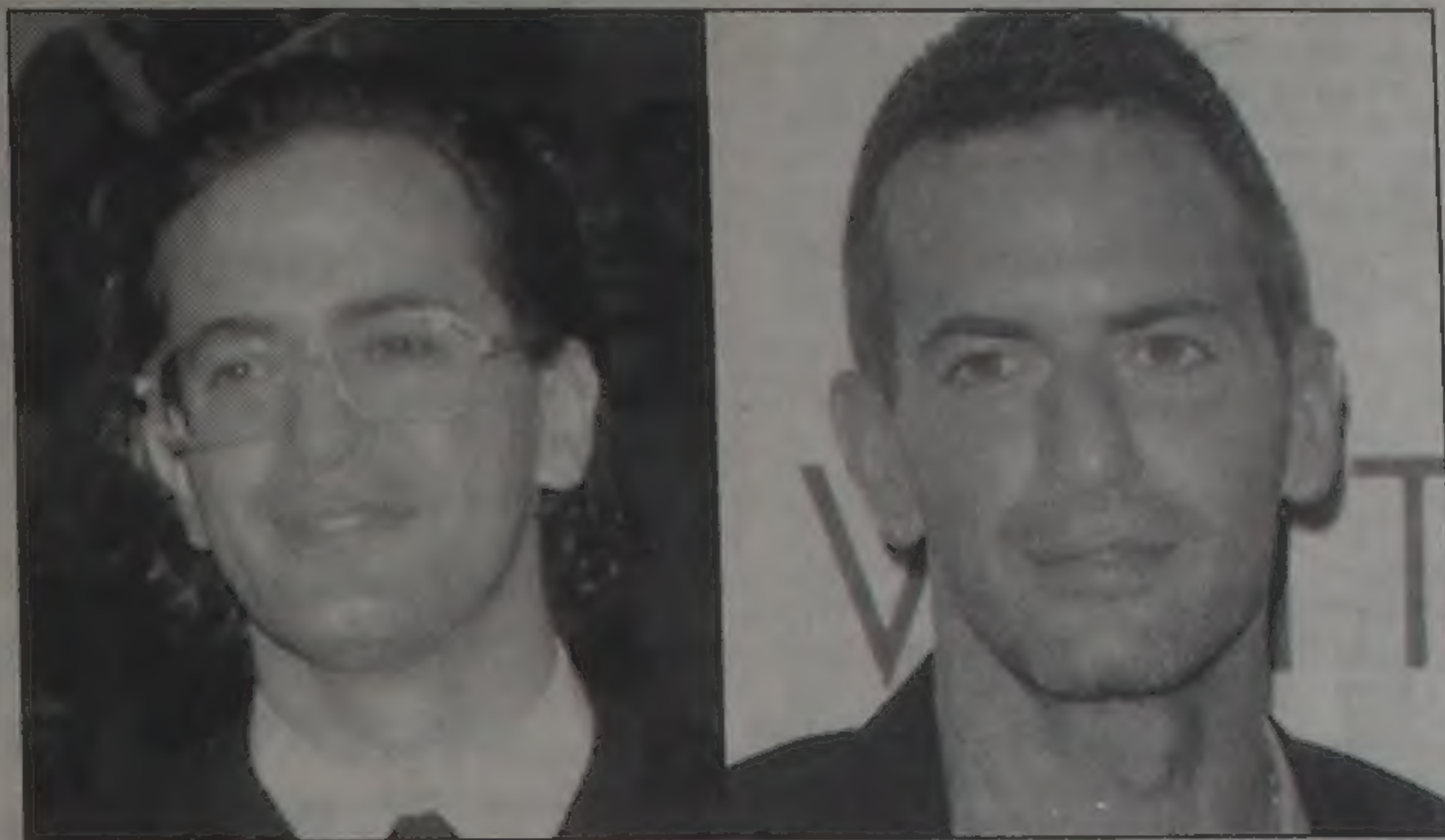
While walking past one of the decaying Make it Not Suck "art bombs" that have transformed Jasper Ave construction site barrier walls into outdoor art galleries, I found myself pondering the recent fate of American designer Marc Jacobs.

While running my hands across the peeled and pulled remnants of pasted local rockstar portraits and visual requiems of a city now unrecognizable, I remembered how at the height of my reverence for Jacobs he embodied everything visceral and refreshing now represented in Make it Not Suck. He was a vitalizing voice from outside the elite circle of tastemakers who had something to say about design, young people and how the two relate and culture in general.

From its roots, Make it Not Suck is a comment and a reclaiming of the city aesthetic while reminding those in power that people inhabit the city, not merely consumers.

While Make it Not Suck has become a call for urban visual vigilantism, Jacobs has become a key and slightly nauseating figure in the Luxury Goods Distraction Complex that plagues the upper classes and all those wishing to join them. Jacobs sadly has become more famous for his newly toned body than for his body of work.

I am not alone in my disillusionment of



Jacobs' transformation from gawky savant to idiot cover boy. Especially among highbrow fashion writers and gay bloggers, his fall from awkward into the quicksand of slick has become something of a dead Kennedy in the blogosphere, none of which I will repeat here. They tend to focus on his physical transformation, which I think is too bad. Jacobs, like anybody else, is allowed to get fit, get off drugs and try on a different persona. As he expressed in his early work—and Make it Not Suck drives home—ugly is often beautiful.

What the bloggers and the writers are really mourning is the loss of an option.

Jacobs, like Make it Not Suck, expressed himself from the core of creativity, working out his curiosities while

creating the change he wished to see. Rising above the inherent wrestling match of commodification versus expression that often hampers fashion and art he challenged the idea that clothes should be made for those already in the scene by making clothes for those the other designers neglected to consider.

Similarly, Make it Not Suck is far from an esoteric art project by high-minded artists, but is instead a collective response via staple guns and ingenious inspirations brought together by photographer and DJ Sheri Barclay (who fittingly enough worked as a dresser for designer Daryl K in New York).

In the face of shoulder pads and offensively bleak-looking condos Jacobs (early on) and Make it Not Suck provide a much

needed relief to the tear-inducing banality of corporate "creative" expressions.

THE LEGEND OF JACOBS begins in 1992 when he and his collaborator Robert Duffy were fired from their new jobs at the helm of fashion house Perry Ellis. What got them the axe was their audacious—and ultimately trendy—landmark grunge collection. For many people the collection marked the beginning of the '90s and gave a uniform to Generation X. Imagine the newly anointed supermodels of the day as they clomped down the runway in Doc Martens, plaid skirts and oversized Nirvana T-shirts to an assembled audience of thin-lipped ladies in power suits and tightly cravated gentlemen.

It was unglamorous while communicating what was happening in the dull suburban basements of East Coast and Middle America. The press was split, the fashion elite was offended and Jacobs in some circles was crowned "the people's designer," who, because of his bravery, was now out of a job.

Within a decade Jacobs more than rebounded, landing the role of creative director at the powerhouse of fashion Louis Vuitton. It has been since then the transformation of Jacobs has begun. Fashion writer Suzy Menkes calls his Spring '08 Marc Jacobs collection "a bad, sad show." Peppered with transparent pants and globs of satin, Jacobs seems to be referencing the early '90s fashion he railed against.

For me nothing exemplifies the fall of Jacobs more than his print ads. Consider this slippery slope: Kim Gordon and family, Charlotte Rampling, Meg White, Dakota Fanning, Victoria Beckham.

These women, in chronological order, are the subjects of Jacobs's ad campaigns, most from the famous white thick-bordered ads as photographed by Juergen Teller. From talented women of substance to a woman who, instead of singing a solo like her girl power mates during the current Spice Girls reunion tour, opted to strut down a nonexistent runway.

Now don't get me wrong: Posh is my favourite Spice, but compared to Sonic Youth, Rampling and the untapped genius of Sheri Barclay who the hell are the Spice Girls? And what is Marc Jacobs thinking?

In the face of Jacobs and others falling in line with global greed over global need and seemingly detaching themselves from their own creativity, interventions like Make it Not Suck are needed. They are queer responses to the rigidly straight confines we often find ourselves in.

I like to think of what would happen if Jacobs and Barclay met on the corner of 109th and Jasper, a Make it Not Suck installation behind them and a Starbucks straight ahead. Would Sheri say, "Hey, Marc" and rekindle the fire in Jacobs' once pudgy belly, compelling him to strike up a conversation? Or would they do the hipster stare-down and go their separate ways? ♥

ZODIAC

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

ROB BREZSNY
freewill@vuwweekly.com

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

"Men should be barred from holding public office for 100 years," says billionaire Ted Turner. "Men have been running the world for too long and they've made a mess of it." If women were in charge, he adds, "It would be a much more peaceful, prosperous, equitable world in a very short period of time." I agree with everything Turner said except when he implied that men should be prohibited from serving. That's totalitarian, the exact opposite of what I trust a feminine majority would usher in. From an astrological perspective, by the way, 2008 is prime time to move forcefully in the direction of bringing more women into power. And it so happens that Aries people of both genders are best able to lead the way. To jumpstart your ability to fulfill this potential, I urge you to take three actions in the coming week to foster female authority. Men, you may devote two of these to boosting your inner woman.

TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

Musician Chuck Prophet has artistic integrity even if he isn't a megastar. He keeps making records that are inspired by his creative urges rather than by a lust for fame and riches. At age 43, he still tours all over creation, performing in small and mid-size clubs. "I have a dark need to drive around the world in a van like I'm 22," he told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "And I'm good at it, too. I'm good at staring out of a window for long stretches." Prophet's your role

model in the coming week, Taurus. I hope he inspires you to do whatever's necessary as you go about the business of promoting what you love to do with dogged integrity.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)

I've got some of the strangest good news you've ever heard. Ready to open your mind to the odd opportunities? Get this: 1) Your wild speculations could serve you better than your educated guesses. 2) Your experimental urges might be smarter than your cautious plans. 3) Your "stumbles" may lead you to brilliant detours. 4) You just may be able to create lucky breaks out of apparent mistakes.

CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

The World Dream Bank (worlddreambank.org) collects tales recorded by spirited dreamers. I'd like to call your attention to one of those dreams, because you'll benefit from entertaining similar themes. Here's a paraphrased report: "I dreamed I was a telepathic teenage unicorn with five hearts. My lesbian twin, an untameable mare from the Middle of Nowhere Desert, came to join me, as did my best friend, a cute Tyrannosaurus Rex doctor on roller skates. We built a boat and sailed off into a warm red sea, headed towards a rite of passage that we looked forward to as a fun adventure. We passed a buoy with a sign that said, 'Beware of Insane Swimming Bunnies.' We weren't scared in the least. We had packets of magic confetti that we knew would make the bunnies sane."

LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

Tibetans use the phrase "Gadrii nongor shulen jongu," which literally means "to give a green answer to a blue question."

It's what happens when a person offers a reply that is unrelated to the question that has been asked. This is an apt description of a certain situation you're either dealing with now or will soon be. It may be that someone close to you is responding with irrelevant answers to your piercing inquiries. Or it might be that you have misunderstood a mystery that a friend has presented to you. A third possibility: A question you've been asking yourself is the wrong question.

VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

"Success means controlling your own time," observed actor Rod Steiger. "If you gain control over 60 per cent of the time in your life, you are really successful." In 2008, Virgo, you will have far more power than you've had before to fulfill this definition of success. And right now you happen to be in a phase of your astrological cycle when your hard work toward this goal will have maximum impact. The ironic fact of the matter is that it's an ideal time to slave away in behalf of greater freedom.

LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

"When it comes time to do your own life," wrote author Rosellen Brown in her book *Civil Wars*, "you either perpetuate your childhood or you stand on it and finally kick it out from under." According to my analysis of the omens, Libra, you will, sometime in 2008, reach the pivotal point Brown referred to. And the coming weeks could be a big turning point. So which way will you go?

SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

The *Onion* newspaper cites a government study showing that America's top product

isn't cars, com, pot or porn, but rather rich, buttery goodness. "Soaring demand among consumers for the melt-in-your-mouth sensation of buttery goodness meant that more than 32 million tons were manufactured and consumed last year," the report said. I advise you to make that experience a top priority in the coming week, Scorpio—even if you're normally a bigger fan of what the *Onion* terms "crispety-crunchiness" or "chewy, double-stuffed deliciousness." According to my analysis of the cosmic omens, you're most likely to thrive if you pursue silky, smooth, velvety, plush feelings of every kind.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

The world's record for skipping stones across the water belongs to Russel Byars. In July 2007, he threw a stone that bounced along the surface of the Allegheny River 51 times before it sank. If that mark is destined to be broken, it may be done by a Sagittarius in the coming week. Your tribe will have an exceptionally light touch. You'll have a knack for getting things to do what they supposedly can't do, even to the point of seeming to violate the law of gravity. You'll be at the peak of your ability to perform amusing tricks, pull off good mischief, and accomplish odd little miracles.

CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

After studying your planetary aspects, I got on my bicycle and took a vow to scour the world for an omen that would embody their meaning. Within a few minutes, I spied what my intuition immediately knew I was looking for: a carport with grass growing on the roof. Here are two interpretations of the oracle: 1) It's now possible for something to grow in a place

that you thought was barren and/or over your head. 2) Fertility will abound in a high place that isn't usually hospitable to sprouting seeds.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

"To be young, really young, takes a very long time," said Picasso. I agree. It's not easy to hone your ability to see the world fresh over and over again. You've got to work for years to immunize yourself against the millions of people who think they're got everything figured out. To cultivate an ingenious and fully awakened innocence, you have to continually shed your temptation to rely on habitual responses, never ceasing from the effort to greet every experience with a beginner's mind. This playful approach to life goes against the grain of every religious teaching, every political system, and every ideology, which means that only the fiercest individualists with a highly developed sense of self can summon the courage to do it. It so happens, Aquarius, that you're now primed to make rapid progress in this noble undertaking.

PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

Whether or not you're a Catholic, I recommend a good stiff dose of confession for you. It's the most effective action you can take to clear out your psychic congestion and prepare the way for an influx of cathartic realizations. So find someone who won't judge you for your so-called sins, and tell him or her about things you've done in the past year that make you feel squeamish or guilty. If there is no such person, confess to a beloved animal, a favourite tree, a passing cloud, or the morning sun. ♥

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Teens (15-19). The Citadel's **Teens @ The Turn Festival** is accepting applications from actors, dancers, playwrights. **Deadline Feb 8.**
www.citadeltheatre.com/teens

Director wanted for musical comedy for Edmonton Fringe. Produced by Maggots Inc. Contact Tom @ 467-8981 or tomsgor@shaw.ca

Edmonton Musical Theatre auditions for *Once Upon A Time In New York* on Sun, **Feb. 24**, 2-5pm at the EMT studio, 10104-121 St, 2nd Fl. Ph Michele Miller at 452-8046 to book an appointment and for info.

Relax with Tax, The Edmonton Cultural Capital

Program presents tips from Peter Messaline (The TaxXman) **Fri, Feb. 15 or Sat, Feb. 16**, 2-5pm at Sutton Place Hotel, Northcote Rm, 10235-101 St. Chrystal at 497-2336, chrystal@edmontonculturalcapital.com

Call for Submissions: Cabaret Performance *Cabaret*. Feats-Festival of Dance is looking for unusual and exceptional talent in all artistic disciplines, including dance (of any style), visual arts, theatre, comedy, performance art, music, graffiti, unique blends, bizarre hybrids. All applicants must include discipline-appropriate documentation (DVD/VHS, CD, portfolio) of the work to be presented. Applications received without the necessary documentation will not be considered. **Deadline: Feb. 30**

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DEAR ANDREA:

I had a beautiful child via donor sperm from a sperm bank. My partner (female) and I are very happy but recently I have been having sexual fantasies about the donor. I have not told this to my significant other (she would not, trust me, understand). I feel an almost spiritual bond with this unknown man and am concerned I may be getting a little obsessed. Do you have any experience in this minefield?

LOVE, A MATTER OF SEMENTICS

DEAR MATTER:

Not directly, no, but as we used to say at San Francisco Sex Information when somebody would call looking for a bisexual transman into water-sports to answer his

question, "We all have the same training! OK if I give it a try?" Of course, "we," whoever "we" are, do not all have the same training, necessarily, but if my time in the trenches has earned me anything, it's a very impressive virtual Rolodex of people who have done or seen or charged for whatever the experience in question might be. I have produced for your edutainment a professional singer who gives great head without harming her throat, a realtor who would throw you out on your ear for attempting that "house humping" business and a dominatrix who can testify to the fact that men who want to be kicked in the balls never show up for their appointments. In other words, here's your expert, my friend who has worked as a teller at the sperm bank, if you will. Call her Polly. Polly Enmity.

It's not uncommon for women using sperm banks to get really attached to their donors. When I worked in the semen industry, I spent countless hours on the phone with

women who wanted to know how hot their donor was, if I would "do him," what celebrity he looked like, how nice he was, what he wore, if he smelled nice ... so, yes, it's super-common to feel attached. I was offered not insignificant sums of money to divulge donors' identities (which I never did, and that's why I'm still broke), and at least one woman asked if we did "live inseminations." In my experience, donor fantasies and attachment are very common, and yours seems to be on the less stalker-ish end of the scale.

And even if you never met the guy, you DID get some of his most intimate bodily fluids inserted into your most intimate parts, so your connection to this donor is, well, pretty understandable. Ever get attached to someone after a one-night stand? It can happen, sure. Now think about a woman who uses the same donor, cycle after cycle, hoping each time to get pregnant and finding out month after month that it hasn't worked ... again. It

almost becomes like a relationship, albeit one that involves you picking your partner off a short description and the kindness of the sperm bank workers who vouch for his character and looks. I've seen women feel upset, angry, even betrayed by this person they have never met.

Now, is this just fantasy, or would you want it to play out in reality? Think: do you really want to know anything more about him? What if he turns out to be your neighbour who had your car towed last week? Or the jerk on his cell phone sitting next to you in a restaurant? If you met him, would you do anything about the sexual feelings, or would it remain a fantasy? I knew many of these donors, and, well, with a couple of exceptions, many of them were nice, average guys trying to earn a few bucks by selling their genetic material, but most of them weren't really such fertile fantasy fodder. I think you should trust me on this: your fantasy of your donor is probably much better—and hotter—than the reality. —Polly

Trust Polly! She had some hilarious and fairly scarifying stories from the deepest vaults of the sperm bank—tales from the crypt—and many of them actually did involve people or their products not smelling so nice. This is not something you need to think about while cuddling your sweet baby, who I'm sure smells lovely. While Polly and I both steadfastly stand by your right to fantasize about any damned thing that pleases you, some fantasies are just inconvenient and ultimately more trouble than they're worth. You wouldn't want to fantasize about your boss every morning in the shower, only to have to face her and be all professional and not at all sweaty as soon as you got to work, would you? This one isn't that bad as long as you keep in mind that actually tracking down the donor would be like suicide, only messier, so that anonymity thing sure was a good idea in this case.

LOVE, ANDREA

ARTIST TO ARTIST

Stratford County Weavers meet every Wed, 9:30-11am at Smeltzer House. Ph Delores Zadko, 467-7213 for more info.

Artists and photographers wanted to discuss the displaying of work for possible co-op. Contact at email: natureliving1@hotmail.com

Noni Boyle Art Talk: Alberta Society of Artists in partnership with the Edmonton Public Library present a free public lecture with Noni Boyle on **Thu, Feb. 21, 7pm** at the Stanley A. Milner Theatre (downstairs) 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square.

Models wanted: Harcourt House Arts Centre is hiring female and male models for life drawing classes. No experience necessary. Times variable. Ph 426-4180 for more info.

Profiles seeks proposals from artists for exhibition during 2009. **Deadline: Sat, Mar. 22, 4pm.** Info T: Heidi at 460-4310 or E: ahfheidi@telus.net

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Registration fee: \$21. Info: www.rcvo.org, T: 497.4780

SACE—Public Education Program: Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (www.sace.ab.ca) provides crisis intervention, information, counseling, public education services. For a customized presentation T: 423-4102/F: 421-8734/E: info@sace.ab.ca, www.sace.ab.ca/24 Hour Crisis Line: 423-4121

The PeaceBuilders' Project/www.youcan.ca
Intake III Skills Programs - **Feb. 19-June 6, 2008, 16** Week Employability Skills Program for Youth at risk, 16-20. For more info: YOUNG, 444-3341, Toll free 1-866-362-8000

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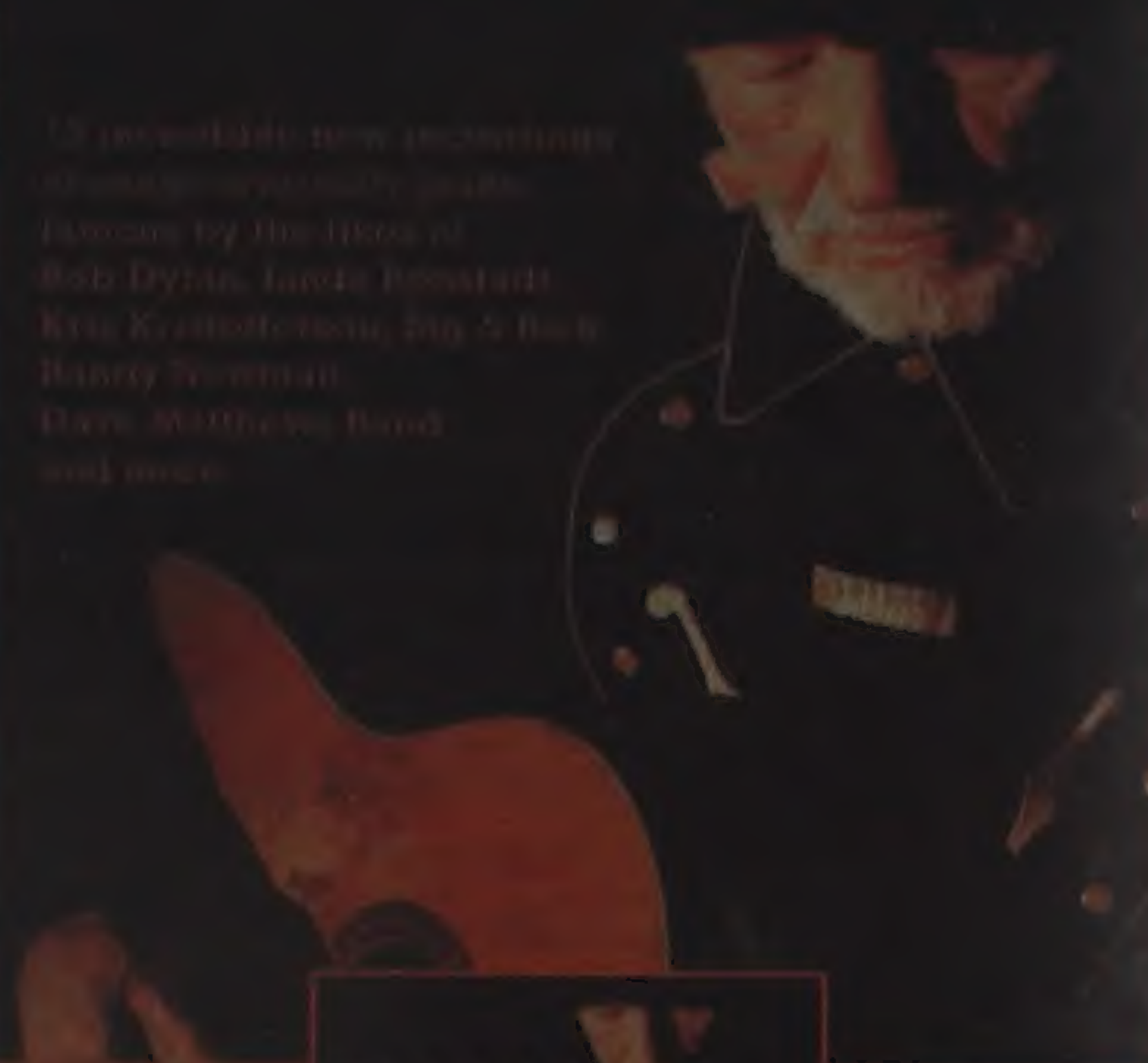
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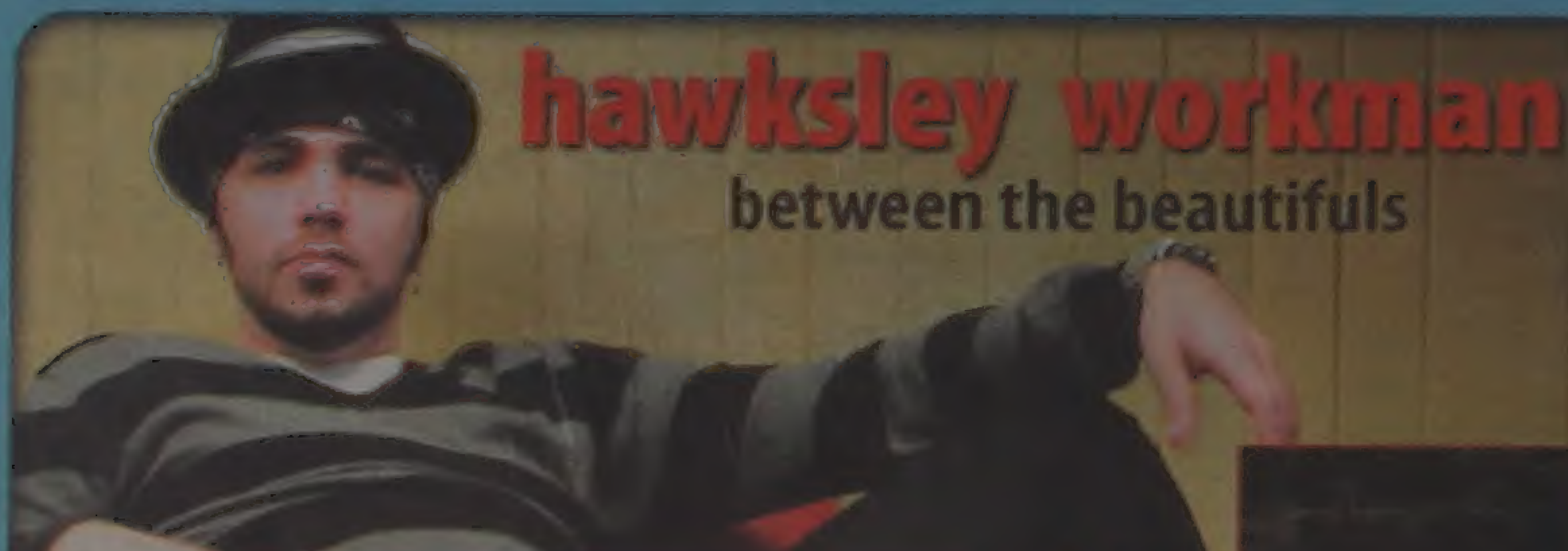
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